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ABSTRACT

Speeches, papers, and summaries of group discussions from Australia's 1978 national seminar on library services for the visually and physically impaired are presented. The opening and keynote addresses are followed by two papers dealing with the present state of services in Australia and other nations, two papers on the library service needs of the blind and physically handicapped, and two papers concerned with meeting those needs in the future. The eight group discussion reports relate to (1) the question of segregation or integration of library services to the handicapped, (2) the role of voluntary organizations in providing such services, (3) promotion of services, (4) training of library service staff members who serve the handicapped, (5) rationalization of resources, (6) role of library services to the handicapped, (7) design of facilities to accommodate the handicapped, and (8) delivery of library services to the handicapped. Appendices provide a list of seminar participants; guidelines for the group discussions; a survey of institutions of higher education offering courses in librarianship; copyright implications of library services for the handicapped; a section detailing the principles, requirements, and structure of library services to the blind; and a reading list on library services to the handicapped. (FM)

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In the framework of UNISIST (World Science Information System), NATIS (National Information Systems) and ALBIS (Australian Library Based Information System)

Networks Study No. 9

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED

A National Consultative Seminar
Canberra, 1-3 August 1978
PAPERS

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PREFACE

IT IS A LONG TIME - more than seven years in fact - since May 1971 when the Senate Standing Committee on Health and Welfare issued its Report on Mentally and Physically Handicapped Persons in Australia. Among the recommendations in that Report was one that the National Library should conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of a national braille library as part of its services. At the time little was done about this recommendation but the National Library did eventually establish a pool of less used braille books of continuing value.

It gives me great pleasure to know that with the support of the Minister responsible for the National Library, the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon. R.J. Ellicott, and the Minister for Social Security and in association with voluntary, municipal, State and other organisations the National Library may be able, seven years later, to assist in the development of library services, not only for the blind but also for the print handicapped generally, on a national basis.

The report of the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped, which was appointed with Ministerial approval in May 1977, will show ways in which this can be achieved. Publication is expected in early 1979. Already, as a result of the Working Party's activities, the National Library has conducted a National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People. The Report of the Survey was published in July 1978; that report is now followed by these papers of the national consultative seminar on library services for the handicapped. This seminar brought together, in some cases for the first time, many who are vitally concerned in providing library services to the handicapped.

As will be seen from the following pages, the National Library is expected to play a substantial role in association with voluntary societies and state and municipal libraries in developing library services for the handicapped. Provided that staff and financial resources are made available to it, the National Library will undertake the construction and maintenance of a national union catalogue of library materials for the handicapped. This task falls clearly within the National Library's functions. We already have a national union catalogue of monographs and even one of material in Chinese. The Library will establish a national clearing centre to co-ordinate co-operation in the transcription of materials into formats suitable for use by handicapped people. This centre will also undertake to arrange for the clearance of copyrights. The Library will also act as a centre for international interlibrary loans.

The National Library is conscious as well of the importance of providing easy access to Australian literature in formats suitable for the print handicapped, and will do all it can to encourage this and the development of a national collection of library materials for the handicapped.

It is my hope that, from modest beginnings such as these, library services for the handicapped in Australia will ultimately reach world standard as exemplified by those provided by the Library of Congress in the United States. The provision of services at this level is expensive and it is because of the expense that we must make the greatest possible use of the resources that are available to us. The statutory functions of the National Library include responsibility for the development of national collections of library materials, providing bibliographical services, and fostering national and international co-operation. Hence the National Library is willing to take its place in a national resource sharing network for handicapped people and to work in closer association with voluntary associations and State and municipal libraries as has been done in the resource sharing networks already in operation for the medical sciences and for industry. This concept of resource sharing was specifically approved by the Government at the seminar on national resource sharing held in the National Library in 1976 and offers the key to cost-effective development in many areas in order to meet the needs of the community for library and library-based information services.

The National Library wishes to thank all those who attended the Seminar, and those who sponsored them. Their support and active participation ensured that this Seminar will be a milestone in the development of library services, nationwide, to serve handicapped people in Australia.

G. Chandler
Director-General

November 1978

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INTRODUCTION

ONE HUNDRED AND ONE people attended Library Services for the Handicapped: A National Consultative Seminar which took place in Canberra on 1,2, and 3 August, 1978. The seminar was sponsored by the National Library of Australia in association with the National Advisory Council for the Handicapped. It was organised by the National Library on the recommendation of the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped.

The Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped was established in May 1977 by the National Library with the agreement of the Ministers for Social Security and for Administrative Services at the suggestion of the National Advisory Council for the Handicapped. Its terms of reference are

> "To investigate and recommend on library services for the handicapped including the possibility of mounting a national conference or seminar of organisations interested in the question"

The members of the Working Party are

Mr W.D. Thorn, National Library of Australia (Chairman)
Mr D. Barron, National Library of Australia
Mr J. Brudenall, Library Association of Australia
Mrs S. Champion, Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled
Mr D. Hall, Department of Social Security
Mr F.T. Hill, National Advisory Council for the Handicapped
Mr K.A.R. Horn, State Librarians' Council
Mrs Norma Rigby, MBE, Australian Association for the Mentally Retarded
Mr D. Marshall, Wagga Wagga City Library
Mrs D. White, Australian National Council of and for the Blind

Early in its deliberations the Working Party decided it was desirable that, before it reported, an opportunity should be given for handicapped people and representatives of libraries, voluntary agencies, government instrumentalities, and others interested in library services for handicapped people to come together to discuss the question of how library services can meet the informational, cultural, and recreational needs of handicapped people, particularly those who are print-handicapped. As a starting point for discussion, a print-handicapped reader was defined as one who is significantly restricted in his/her ability or capacity to use conventional print material because of a visual handicap or because of a physical handicap which prevents him/her from holding or controlling a book.

The Working Party believed that there was a need to focus discussion on the needs of those who can be identified as incapable of using conventional print materials because of blindness or severe visual impairment, or because of physical handicaps resulting in a restriction of capability to hold or manipulate reading materials. The written and printed word is still the most widely used method of recording knowledge. The lack of access to the printed word is a major handicap suffered by those who are unable to use conventional libraries and library materials. It was felt that to allow discussion to range too widely could dissipate momentum and weaken the chances of arriving at clearly expressed conclusions and attitudes.

Bearing these constraints in mind, the major objectives of the seminar were

- to stimulate the interest of those concerned with the provision of library services and to direct their attention to the special needs of handicapped people
- to consider the respective roles of public libraries and voluntary agencies in the provision of library-type services for handicapped people
- to suggest lines for the future development of services and the means by which the special needs of handicappped people can be kept under notice
- to consider ways in which information about the services available can be brought to the notice of potential users

In order to publicise the seminar a brochure was prepared. It had a wide distribution which included all libraries and welfare organisations that provide library services to handicapped people, government departments and voluntary agencies concerned with providing services to the handicapped, organisations of handicapped people, and individuals known to have an interest in the field. The seminar was also publicised by advertisements in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Age, the Australian, and the Australian Library Journal. Notices about the seminar were distributed with the Annual Report of the National Advisory Council for the Handicapped, with the NACH Digest, and in Rehabilitation in Australia. The seminar brochure was also recorded and distributed in audio form.

The seminar was held at University House, Australian National University, where all the working sessions took place and most of the out of town participants were accommodated. As will be seen from the program, the seminar took the form of plenary sessions which were addressed by speakers on topics germane to the subject of the seminar and small discussion groups which explored specific topics in considerable depth. The discussion group topics are set out on page . The seminar documentation was produced in braille and audio forms for those delegates who were unable to use the inkprint version.

At the concluding session of the seminar each discussion group presented a written report which set down as concisely as possible the points raised and discussed, the attitudes of the group to the topic, and any conclusions reached by the group. In reading these reports it should be remembered that they were produced under considerable pressure in a short space of time. The views expressed may not always represent all the individual views of the members of the groups which produced them. It must be recognised that individual members of the discussion groups may have accepted serious compromise in order to ensure that a report was produced in the time allowed. Nevertheless, the reports represent an important input to the deliberations of the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped.

This volume of papers reproduces the texts of the papers delivered or distributed at the seminar together with the reports of the discussion groups. It is published as a record of the seminar and as a contribution to the further development and improvement of library services for handicapped people in Australia.

PROGRAM

All plenary sessions will be held in the Common Room, University House

Tuesday 1 August

9.00 am	Registration
10.00 am	Official opening by the Hon. R.J. Ellicott, QC, MP, Minister for Home Affairs Chairman: Senator Gordon S. Davidson, Deputy Chairman, Council of the National Library of Australia
10.30 am	Morning tea
11.00 am	Keynote Address The role of federal, state, municipal and community organisations in providing library services to the handicapped - The American Experience. Dr Ervin J. GAINES, Cleveland Public Library Chairman: Dr G. Chandler, Director-General, National Library of Australia
11.45 am	Group discussions
12.30 pm	Lunch in the Hall
1.30 pm	The Present Scene: Australia and overseas (i) Australia - Results from the National Survey of Library Service for Handicapped People W.D.THORN - National Library of Australia (ii) Overseas patterns of service Graham L. LAURENCE - Royal Blind Society of NSW Chairman: Senator Gordon S. Davidson
2.30 pm	Group discussions (Afternoon tea will be available between 3.00 and 3.30 pm in the Hall foyer)
4.15 pm	Plenary session Chairman: Dr G. Chandler
5.00 pm	Close
7.00 for 7.30 pm	Seminar Dinner in the Hall, University House Speaker: The Hon. Mr Justice C.L.D. Meares CMG, Chairman National Advisory Council for the Handicapped

Wednesday 2 August

9.00 am The needs of handicapped readers

(i) The blind

D.L. WESTAWAY - Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Associations of Australia

(ii) The physically handicapped

Dr Bruce FORD - National Advisory Council for the Handicapped

Chairman: Mr F.T. Hill, National Advisory Council for the Handicapped

10.00 am Morning tea
10.30 am Group discussions
12.30 pm Lunch
1.30 pm Meeting the needs of handicapped readers

(i) How modern technology can help

Lloyd JUNOR - Melbourne State College

(ii) Possibilities for library service

Donald E. SCHAUDER - Prahran College of Advanced Education

Chairman: Mr R.F. Doust, State Librarian
State Library of New South Wales

2.30 pm Group discussions (Afternoon tea will be available between 3.00 and 3.30 pm in the Hall foyer)
4.15 pm Plenary session
Chairman: Dr G. Chandler
5.00 pm Close
5.20 pm Bus from University House to National Library
5.30 pm Reception at National Library in the Nan Kivell Room
7.00 pm Bus from National Library to University House
Evening free

Thursday 3 August

9.00 am Group discussions
10.00 am Morning tea
10.30 am Plenary session - Group reports
Chairman: Dr G. Chandler
12.30 pm Lunch
1.30 pm Plenary session - general summing up
Chairman: Dr G. Chandler
3.00 pm Close

OFFICIAL OPENING
Welcome

Senator GORDON S. DAVIDSON
Deputy Chairman, National Library of Australia

MR MINISTER, Mr Director-General, Distinguished Guests, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome this morning to the National Library's Consultative Seminar on Library Services for the Handicapped. We are glad to have you with us and we thank you for coming.

We bring you an apology from the Chairman of the National Library Council, Mr Kenneth Myer, who regrets that he is unavoidably absent this morning. He sends his good wishes and will be interested to have details of the seminar in due course.

We are especially pleased to have with us our Minister, the Hon. R.J. Ellicott, M.P. He is Minister for Home Affairs as well as Minister, it seems, for everything else!

The National Library has been moved once again, but we are appreciative of our Minister, and mindful of Mr Ellicott's understanding of the National Library's role - and also its problems.

We are further pleased to have with us a number of guests. Some of these come from societies associated with the handicapped whilst from the USA we have Dr Gaines of the Cleveland Public Library. Cleveland, as you are all aware, is famous for its Orchestra, but as Dr Gaines has reminded me, unlike the Orchestra, his Library does not go on tour!

But most of all, we, of the National Library are mindful of the concern which you all feel and we are very grateful for the work which has been done by so many organisations in relation to library services for the handicapped. This work and this concern finds expression in your presence here today, and all of this is greatly appreciated.

The National Library as a statutory corporation has a number of powers conferred upon it - and a number of responsibilities entrusted to it. It is charged with the maintenance and development of a national collection of library material - and further to make the material in that collection available to persons and institutions.

It will be understood and appreciated that an institution like the National Library of Australia set up as recently as 1960 has of necessity to concentrate on the immediate fulfilment of its obvious and urgent mission. That is, in general terms, the traditional and expected role of library services, and these have been established. Associated with this aspect has been the important beginning of information services which have been developed as a matter of national importance.

Associated with all of this were our several international responsibilities. In addition, there was the urgency of relationships with a number of fields. These included the field of science - of industry - of education - and of the humanities, whilst a very important item was the matter of serving the particular and growing needs of Canberra.

Now, while considerable progress has been made in all of these areas, recent financial restraints and staff ceiling situations have meant a certain curtailment of services and some restriction on our extension and development.

But although our particular involvement with library services for the handicapped has waited for longer than we would have liked - there has been a growing sense of awareness of the need - and the desire to meet that need.

When the Senate Standing Committee on Health and Welfare (and I was privileged to be a member of that Committee) put down its Report on Mentally and Physically Handicapped Persons in Australia in May of 1971, it drew attention to the need for library services for the handicapped - especially the blind.

It called for the National Library of Australia to do a feasibility study regarding the establishment of a National Braille Library. It pointed to the particular need for reference and non-fiction material to be available - on a national basis. The Report also drew attention to the great unevenness in Australia in terms of facilities and services to the handicapped.

Now, a great deal has been said about the role of the American Library of Congress, and its services to the handicapped. Their record is impressive and we shall hear more of it in the next few days. I have seen something of their program myself, and their splendid facilities alert one to the possibilities and opportunities that can be provided to help the handicapped lead a richer life.

The matter of provision and distribution of these services will receive the study of the seminar and its conclusions will be of great interest and usefulness.

It is important to point out that services to the handicapped must extend to the whole range of handicaps and this requires great diversity of operation and much continuing research. Furthermore, modern library services are not confined simply to books or to reading, but do involve the provision of greater resources with all their requirements to fulfil these functions.

But we will be aware of all of this as we give our attention to the proceedings of the seminar and undertake the studies with resolve and understanding.

I say again that the National Library is glad to see you all and we wish you well as you devote yourselves to these important studies.

I repeat that we are honoured to have with us our Minister this morning. Mr Ellicott is the Member for Wentworth in the House of Representatives. He is a distinguished Queen's Counsel, Solicitor-General, and Minister. In thanking him for his attendance today, it is my pleasure to ask him to address the seminar and to declare it open.

OFFICIAL OPENING

Opening Speech

Hon. R.J. ELLICOTT, QC, MP
Minister for Home Affairs

IT IS DIFFICULT for us to appreciate fully the disadvantages suffered by those who cannot read normal print. Reading widens our horizons and plays a key role in our obtaining knowledge and information.

Fortunately, many welfare societies have been founded in Australia to make known and to help meet the needs of the handicapped. Municipal and State library services have also provided facilities to meet local needs. Hitherto, the Commonwealth Government has made only very small provision through the National Library.

Following the visit of Miss Zabel of the Division of the Blind of the Library of Congress in 1976, the National Library accepted a recommendation of the Library Association of Australia that it should investigate the needs of the handicapped for library services.

The National Advisory Council for the Handicapped also supported this proposal. As a result, my colleagues, Senator Guilfoyle and Senator Withers, then the Minister responsible for the National Library, agreed that the Library should appoint a Working Party to formulate proposals. Needless to say, I fully support this initiative. This is a matter which has had the full support of Senator Knight of the ACT. The Government would like the Library to give priority to the development of these services in its work.

The National Library is very conscious of its responsibility to act as a bridge between voluntary, local, State and Federal organisations and the national libraries of other countries to ensure the cost effective development of library services to the handicapped. The National Library proposes, however, to continue to make its services available only through local organisations and not to provide them directly to individuals.

I am aware, as you are, that the Library of Congress' current budget for the handicapped is of the order of $29 million per annum. In the United States the services themselves are also provided through local organisations, as you will hear later from Dr Gaines of Cleveland. The services

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to the handicapped in Cleveland are amongst the most highly developed in the world and reveal a very satisfactory collaboration between voluntary organisations, municipal and State authorities and the federally supported Library of Congress.

The attendance at this seminar by representatives from voluntary organisations and municipal and State bodies is, I think, evidence of the desire of Australian organisations concerned with the handicapped to collaborate in providing a more effective service. I have learnt with interest of the nation-wide collaboration in the survey of library services for handicapped people which the National Library has conducted this year. This survey provides important factual data for the discussions at this seminar. It will also be of significant use to all agencies responsible for providing and planning for library services, particularly library services for the handicapped, in Australia. In addition, the National Library has published a directory of library services for the visually and physically handicapped in Australia[1]. This was the Library's first large print publication and copies were also produced in braille. In this financial year the Library will continue to give priority to the provision of services and staff necessary to continue and develop its current involvement in developing national and international co-operation in services to the handicapped.

Last year three Australian submissions on services for the handicapped were made to the Council of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). Since then the Federation's international activities to develop international co-operation in services to the handicapped have been intensified. One of the reasons why this seminar is being held now is that its conclusions will be available for reporting by the Director-General to meetings on the handicapped during the IFLA Council in September which he is attending whilst on leave. He tells me that important discussions are taking place aimed at resolving the technical and copyright difficulties which exist between the US, UK and other national services to the handicapped. It is necessary for these to be overcome in order to develop services in the most cost-effective way.

I hope, therefore, that the deliberations of this seminar will be successful this year in making a further step forward in improving services to the handicapped.

I have much pleasure in declaring the seminar open.

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[1] National Library of Australia, Library Services for the Visually and Physically Handicapped: a Directory. Canberra, National Library of Australia, 1977. ISBN 0 642 99103 0

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Role of Federal, State, Municipal and Community Organisations in Providing Library Services to the Handicapped - The American Experience

Ervin J. GAINES
Director, Cleveland Public Library

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD has only recently regarded people with disabilities as worthy of the attention of government. The gross abuse and neglect of the ill, the crippled, the mentally retarded, the abandoned or orphaned child, so vividly recorded in the writings of Victorian reformers, have been substantially reduced in the last 30 or 40 years. Progress toward greater civility and sensitivity in caring for the disabled is quite evident, although it proceeds at a pace that invites impatience among those who would speed the rate of reform.

Librarians have been among the leaders of reform, and there is a long and honorable roll of people who have extended the frontiers of public librarianship to embrace those people who would not or could not take advantage of free books and services made available at public expense.

When Herbert Putnam, perhaps the greatest of the Librarians of Congress, was beginning his career in Minneapolis in the 1890's, he began, as many well educated partricians do, to cultivate, in that newly formed public library in what was still a raw frontier city, rare books and distinguished collections. He made buying trips to England to purchase fine and exotic materials to form the nucleus of the collections. Shortly afterward he was invited by some people on the edge of the city two or three miles away to visit them and to talk about sending books from the central library for the people to read, for it was not easy to get around in the snow and the mud of that cold climate. From that visit came the first branch library in the city. Herbert Putnam, in a sense, may have been converted at that point. He recognised that the library could not be confined to an elegant downtown building. Minneapolis never lost that initial insight, nor did Herbert Putnam, as he moved successively to Boston and on to Washington in 1899. It is probably no accident, although I have no documentation to support my opinion, that he was the prime mover in the creation of landmark legislation, for it was during his tenure that the Library of Congress in the 1930's was mandated to develop service to the blind. Putnam was still reaching out, even in the twilight of his career. Meanwhile in Cleveland another great librarian, William Howard Brett, was emulating Putnam's work and making the Cleveland Public Library one of the pioneers in the open shelf library, and in helping establish deposit collections in factories and hospitals, to say nothing of the fact that he also inaugurated the library school at Western Reserve University, of which he was Dean.

These two men hardly worked in isolation, since they were representative of a general social movement; nevertheless they were both outstanding, and I have had the unique privilege of serving as director of the libraries launched by them, and have been exposed to the traditions they initiated.

Concern among librarians for the welfare of the physically handicapped is particularly notable, and currently that caring extends beyond materials and service to the most intricate detail of building design.

Cleveland, at the moment, is renovating several old Carnegie libraries to conform to modern requirements for the handicapped. The expense is great, but the symbolic value of the changes is worth the cost if for no other reason than that it heightens the awareness of the physically able to the deprivations visited upon their less fortunate fellows. The economic value of erecting buildings for the least able whose numbers are small is often called into question, and the choice between cost and charity is warmly contested politically, although in relative silence, since no politician would ever wish to be charged with callousness in withholding public money from service to the physically handicapped. Retribution can be swift for those who violate the rule of silence. Several years ago the state librarian of Ohio lost his job because he had rallied the blind to put pressure upon the state legislature for more funds, an unforgiveable faux pas. Winning support for appropriations from public funds for services to the handicapped is a matter worthy of special consideration by itself, for these minority groups cannot alone and unaided exert great political leverage. There are too few votes among them and they must learn to call into play the decent instincts of the able.

Let me this morning review very swiftly the historical highlights of the American experience. In the 19th century some city libraries began small collections of embossed books. In 1897 John Russell Young made the first tentative gestures toward a national effort by creating a reading room for the blind in the Library of Congress. In 1904, shortly after Putnam had succeeded Young as the Librarian, Congress provided free mail service for books for blind people. Six years later Putnam gave the Library of Congress' braille collection to the District of Columbia Public Library on the ground that it was a local, popular, not a national, scholarly, effort. That was a tactical error, for the ensuing agitation by the blind caused him to reverse his decision. The books were recalled and the Library of Congress continued to provide this essential service. Collection and circulation grew slowly until 1931, the watershed year, when Congress mandated the Library of Congress to arrange for regionalised service. Because of the vast distances in the United States, mail service from Washington was slow, and the new law helped to shorten the lines of communication and of travel between library and reader. Nineteen regional libraries were designated, from Albany in the east to Honolulu in the west.

The next major effort was a technological one, the use of sound to augment the written word, which in embossed letters is obviously costly, slow and cumbersome both to produce and to use. LC began experimenting with recordings in 1933, and even now the familiar disk has not yet been completely displaced by the lighter and more compact magnetic tape reel or cassette; but it is self-evident that lighter weight and increased density of storage will continue to provide targets for improvements in audio books for the blind. Some years ago the Library of Congress established a target date for total transference of talking books from disk to tape, but withdrew in the face of persistent technological problems, especially with tape. LC therefore continues to this day to produce books on both disks and tapes.

The use of sound has its own inherent difficulties because it requires the intervention of equipment between book and reader. Supply of equipment to readers has been resolved in any number of ways from outright ownership by the patron to various systems of loan. Occasionally record playbacks are not available rapidly enough and, of course, problems of repair and replacement present certain complexities and delays. In addition to the personal and private opportunities provided by recordings, useful experiments with radio augment the service. Special broadcast bands have been set aside for passive reception of such material as readings from current newspapers and periodicals. This effort has experienced some success, but with one exception, it has not been a task assigned to libraries. In Cleveland librarians have volunteered to read current materials (like newspapers) for broadcast,but this work is beyond the scope of our library's official responsibility.

With the advent of sound and its greater convenience, the use of braille books has slowly declined. It is estimated that only about 5 percent of readers in the Cleveland area have acquired the skill to read braille, and it should no go unnoticed that lack of ability to interpret words from a printed page (or an embossed page) constitutes a form of illiteracy, and this development is of some concern to well-educated blind people. What social implications this fact may have I do now know, although it may be useful to raise for the future the question of what will happen, not only to the blind but to the sighted as well if we all should experience loss of ability to interpret printed symbols - that is, to read in the traditional sense.

An experimental machine just developed by an American electronics firm and demonstrated at the recent annual meeting of the American Library Association, will soon be delivered to the Library of Congress for study. The machine can scan a printed page and transform the letters into a synthetic speech which is decipherable, if hardly pleasing to the ear. Nevertheless, the fact that such an invention is even possible suggests that we may yet find a way to convert upon demand the entire universe of printed materials to sound. The implications of such a development are awesome although not at this time defineable.

But even as we have pushed forward with audio techniques, braille experimentation still goes on. In a recent address Frank Cylke,of the Library of Congress, called attention to research in France and Germany which seems to promise the rapid production of braille on tape both for books and for personal communication. I am sure that the advent of technological breakthrough in braille is much awaited, for the economics of present methods works against production in anything like the needed quantities. Current book publishing in the United States approaches only 90 copies of a single book. The largest run of a periodical is no more than 2500 copies. Cylke reports that it costs $1.5 million to produce 350 book titles and 20 periodicals. There are no more than 50,000 titles in braille in the Library of Congress. When compared with what is available to sighted persons this represents only a token. The projected addition to the LC collections in 1979 will be 700 titles in braille and another 2000 in audio form, which tells us which way the tide is going at the moment.

The hope for expansion of the universe of braille books to meet anything like the latent demand and the human need obviously cannot be realized until there is a swifter and cheaper system. That is a great challenge.

To return to the legislative history: after 1931 Congress made no significant change until 1952 when it amended the law, which oddly enough had specified only adults, to include children in its public service to the blind. In 1966 Congress made a great leap forward when it extended the Braille and Talking Book Service to the physically handicapped. This radical amendment enormously expanded the clientele to be served. The new mandate stimulated two new areas of effort - first to identify and classify the new eligibles, and second to try to reach them. It has been a relatively complex task to determine eligibility under the 1966 law and to state the outer limits of service. Success in reaching these new eligibles has not been as rapid as we might wish, a matter to which I will refer a bit later.

Once Congress was induced to leap beyond the visually handicapped to include people with other sorts of physical limitations, the temptation could not be resisted to try to press the frontiers even further by the entry of pleas on behalf of those with non-physical disabilities. For example, it is now accepted to include in the service someone suffering from dyslexia arising from a certified neurological malfunction. But what of those with psychiatric disorders? Or the mentally retarded,whose learning rates can be improved through the use of talking books? The political pressure to include such people is taking us so far from the original premise of the service as to make some prudent people wonder if the practical economic limits of book service may already have been reached.

One outcome of the divergence of views in the United States is that service to the blind is not uniformly distributed from public libraries. The agency that manages the service in each state or region is determined by the states, but no regional library may be established without approval from the Library of Congress. One way or another the number of outlets has grown from the original 19 to 56, the two most recent having been established in 1977, one in the capital of the small New England state of Vermont and one in Juneau, Alaska. Not every state has a regional library; the most populous states - New York, California, Pennsylvania and Ohio - each have two. The service is made more complex by the existence of 98 sub-regional libraries which are as you might expect satellites of the regionals. However, sub-regionals do not give full service - for example, they do not handle braille.

The operation of this network is complicated. The Federal government is responsible for supplying the books, and the Library of Congress alone determines which books will be prepared in either braille or talking book format. This does not preclude the regional libraries from adding titles to suit their needs, but copyright releases must be obtained from Library of Congress; hence we can see that book selection has been centralised to a degree that makes me uncomfortable. The censorship implications of this practice ought to be of concern, but I have not heard the issue raised anywhere. The people who are selected to read for talking books for LC publication must meet standards of voice quality established by LC,and if these high quality readers are pre-empted for the preparation of books at LC they are not then available to the regional libraries. This probably insures good quality control nationally, but the rigidity of the system can occasionally deprive a local library from using the services of an outstanding reader in its own community to produce books of local and regional interest. So one more complication is added.

Copyright is a very touchy subject. Under LC rules, a talking book can be loaned only to a qualified client, the purpose being to protect publishers who waive their claims to royalties only on condition that the circulation of the books be strictly confined to qualified users. The extreme delicacy of the matter of copyright is a deterrent to mass production of talking books. A play cannot be recorded with more than one voice,else it would be a performance and would infringe upon the author's rights to performances of his work. Australia, if it has not done so, might wish to deliberate a different approach which would avoid the myriad pitfalls of copyright by considering whether in the long run public interest would be better served by purchasing the right to copy books from publishers. In England, for example, copyright does not extend to braille at all. However, this is a complicated matter in which I have no expertise and again I can offer no advice,except to say that the universe of talking books for the handicapped is not in the United States available to the general public owing to economic interests of publishers and authors who quite understandably are not about to yield the property rights vested in their books.

One can fairly conclude that the foundation of the American system is carefully balanced on the general goodwill of copyright owners. If that goodwill should ever be brought into jeopardy the entire enterprise might be threatened with collapse. The Library of Congress deserves great credit for maintaining the climate of co-operation, but it seems to me that the system is not the best that could be devised. I do not easily accept the notion that books in braille or in audio form must issue only to a specified class of readers, for that artificial limitation runs counter to the philosophy of free access.

I cannot provide you with the total cost of the system because it is diversely funded by the Federal government, states,private philanthropy and local government. I can give you an idea, however. In Ohio, which has about 8% of the population of the nation, the state and its two regional libraries, Cleveland and Cincinnati, report recent annual expenditures of about $400,000 in direct costs of personnel and materials. In 1977-1978 the Library of Congress budget for the blind and physically handicapped was almost $29 million, a large portion of which went to book production. One official document indicates that over and above the budget of the Library of Congress, about $12 million is expended throughout the nation, making a combined total of $41 million. There are many other hidden costs which are not reflected in these figures - volunteer effort, managerial overhead, free postage. I would hazard a guess - and it is only a guess - that one way or another, the total economic value of the service is probably within a range of $75 to $100 million annually, or from 35 to 50 cents per inhabitant of the nation.

I have already said that the actual and potential clientele is not easy to assess. In 1977 Ohio recorded by actual count 20,250 persons who received one or more books during the year, two thirds of them blind or visually handicapped, one third with other physical disabilities. That total is less striking than the rate of growth. Mostly owing to the change in the law in 1966 to include the physically handicapped,Ohio's clients increased from 5,500 to 20,250 between 1968 and 1977, a percentage increase of about 370 percent - in a relatively static population. This speaks well for the ability of the system to reach people who can use the service provided that the funds are made available. The Library of Congress estimates that service reach has increased nationally by about 500 percent in 10 years and that the number of distribution centres has doubled.

Best estimates available indicate that the potential clientele in the United States is somewhere near 8 million persons. Against this we note that in 1975 fewer than 500,000 readers were tallied nationally. The potential for improvement is obviously very great. If the service can be expanded to capture more readers, quite clearly substantially greater appropriations will be required. The cost per borrower, a more significant figure than the cost per inhabitant, is now running somewhere between $10 and $20 annually. Given the current negative attitudes toward taxation in the United States, I would doubt that growth will be as rapid in the next several years as it has been in the past.

I have dwelt on Federally supported service to the blind and physically handicapped. This is clearly only one part of the library effort, but it is the only segment on which reasonably accurate statistics exist because it is the only service which is national in scope. Other programs are fragmentary and extremely uneven, depending as they do on local initiatives, economic strength, and the energy and ingenuity of librarians.

There has been a recent upsurge in interest in service to the deaf, who are precluded from use of oral techniques which are of benefit to the blind but relatively useless to the deaf. Ohio has approximated the number of citizens with hearing impairment at 36,000, which, extrapolated nationally, would suggest nearly a half million people. An effort is now being made to provide deaf people with access to teletype machines through which they can communicate with the library. Cleveland will very shortly install its first machine for this purpose, and measurable experience should be available in a year or two. Story telling for children using sign language and visuals is being experimented with, but because librarians have not themselves acquired the technique, specially trained people must be brought in.

Hospitalised persons are of great interest. Many publicly supported hospitals have long maintained a strong library service for their own patients. The Veteran's Administration hospitals, for example, have very well programmed libraries in the many hospitals maintained for veterans throughout the United States. Similarly state and county hospitals often have examplary service; but excellence varies from place to place and it is not possible to generalise. In private hospitals the disparity is even greater.

The public library as a service agent in hospitals overlaps with internally developed service within hospitals. In Ohio last year there were 857,000 hospital admissions. What portion of those could be public library targets is anybody's guess, and the evolving practice of medicine, making hospital stays ever shorter for most patients, suggests that we are not very well set to make future determinations. Some public libraries give service to hospital patients; most do not. Even among those that do, practice varies widely and there is no accepted standard. To the degree that service is provided at all it ranges from simple rotating deposit collections, distributed by volunteers, on up to well maintained libraries in sites manned by full time staff members. However, the practice of serving patients is spreading. In 1971 36 libraries in Ohio provided service to hospitals. By 1977 the numbers had grown to 87. Cleveland, which has developed a world-wide reputation for its hospital service,still has not achieved total and equal service within the city. Some hospitals in Cleveland receive no service at all from the Library; one, the Cleveland Clinic, has a full time staff member on the premises every week day, the salary paid for by the Clinic. The disparity in service is partly dependent upon the hospital administrations. If the managers of hospitals are not attuned to the service they will reject it on one pre-text or another. Most of those that do not co-operate plead space and budgetary limitations. To give you some insight into the disparities of opinion about hospital service, I can report that one of the Trustees of the Cleveland Public Library, a man who is a leading ophthalmogist with one of the city's major hospitals, has expressed skepticism about either the need for or the utility of hospital library service for patients.

There is no agreement among public librarians about the viability of the service. Those who are its passionate advocates often encounter total indifference from others whose major effort is focussed on the more traditional aspects of collection building, reference work and circulation.

A great deal of interest is also appearing for public library service to people incarcerated in prisons and jails. Many Federal and state penitentiaries maintain their own libraries. In Ohio between 1973 and 1977 the census of public libraries giving service to prisons rose from 17 to 37. However, the hostility of the public toward lawbreakers is a great deterrent to library service in this direction.

Cleveland was a pioneer in giving service to another group of readers, the so-called shut-ins, a term that is gradually yielding to the word isolated. These are defined as people who are immobile for one reason or another, whether in their own homes or in institutions. Cleveland's service began in 1936 and continues to this day. The cost of the service is borne in part by a grant from the well-known Judd Fund, administered and controlled by the Cleveland Foundation, an amalgam of many private philanthropies. Again, using only Ohio figures, the number of libraries giving service to the isolated person has reportedly doubled from 102 to 206 between 1973 and 1977.

A more recent phenomenon in the United States has been service to the elderly. As the population distribution is skewed more heavily toward older citizens owing to declining birth rates and somewhat increased longevity, inevitably there is a shift in political emphasis in their favour. Housing complexes and nursing homes designed exclusively for older people have tended, in urban environments, to concentrate them in sufficient numbers to provide service opportunities. Specially equipped bookmobiles, costing about $40,000, have been designed to bring books to them in their housing units. The elderly, obviously, have little in common besides their age, since in all other respects they exhibit the same range of characteristics and abilities reflected in the entire population. However, because they have handicaps, special efforts have been made to reach them through the encouragement provided by Federal and state grants to provide services specially for them.

Cleveland also has been an innovator in trying to draw mobile elderly people together for programs designed for them but given within the Library. Films, lectures and entertainments are regularly scheduled in Cleveland for a group known as the Live Long and Like It Club, which has been in existence for 32 years.

I have only been able in the time available to give you the sketchiest outline of what is being done in the United States. In addition, the intricacies of many of the services require the knowledge and experience of the many experts who have worked with and studied the problems and practices in great detail. In general the American system is scarcely a system at all. Except for the control over braille and talking books from the Library of Congress - and the attendant advice and counsel available from that source - every additional effort is local and takes different forms and shapes according to local initiatives. There is scarcely a model which could be called typical or representative.

Cleveland, which is an older and hence larger library than most, maintains a braille collection of 7600 titles in 40,000 volumes; 7600 talking book titles in 125,000 copies; 700 cassettes in 40,000 copies. Machines for playback are supplied from a machine centre at the state capitol, although in many parts of the nation machine centres are integrated with the regional libraries. Wanted materials not in the collection can often be supplied by the local sight centre, but the Library is prepared to make up readings of short items like pamphlets. The bulk of the work is circulation of books. Some reference work is handled, but the demand is low.

In working in hospitals and with shut-ins, little in the way of equipment is used. We do provide magnifying devices, if needed, but there is no local use of overhead readers and esoteric devices like mechanical page turners. Even large print books are not much in demand, but we do stock them and have a modest call for them.

To conclude then:
In assembling the data required in the preparation of this address, I found myself forced to look at library service from an entirely new perspective. I have come away from the experience with some old convictions reinforced and with some new insights. I am convinced that there is still no substitute for excellence and depth in the collections and in the bibliographic skills of the librarians; I sense that innovations and experiments have somewhat diluted these traditional efforts owing to the small economic base from which we operate; on the other hand the tides of democratic reform are very strong, and the library movement will continue to be in the direction of diversity and of outreach to those who are unserved. In the United States, our approach to library service for the handicapped and the deprived is evolving in a style and manner entirely characteristic of so much in our nation. It is fundamentally unplanned, it is eminently practical, it is not doctrinaire, it is diverse, and it continually unfolds from the endless debates and experimentations of a democratic society. It works (sort of), but it never seems totally satisfactory. It is in its own minor way a model of the method employed by free peoples in resolving any of their dilemmas. It is the method of trail and error. We might echo E.M. Forster after all by saying two cheers for democracy.

I anticipate with pleasure the opportunity to spend some time with you to share in whatever ways may be useful to our community of - shall I say - ignorance. We have much to learn and our work is far from complete.

Thank you.

THE PRESENT SCENE: AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS

Australia: Results from the National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People

W.D. THORN
National Library of Australia

I THINK IT MAY BE USEFUL if I give a little of the background of the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped before discussing the National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People in detail. The Working Party was set up in May last year by the National Library with the agreement of the Ministers for Social Security and Administrative Services. In order to have a representative group the National Advisory Council for the Handicapped, the Australian Association for the Mentally Retarded, the Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled, the Australian National Council for the Blind, the State Librarians' Council and the Library Association of Australia were asked to nominate members of the Working Party. As well as these nominees there are representatives of the Department of Social Security and the National Library. The Working Party was asked to investigate and recommend on library services for the handicapped, including the possibility of mounting a national seminar for organisations interested in the question.

At its first meeting the Working Party agreed that some form of survey involving a questionnaire would be necessary to establish the current position of library services for the handicapped in Australia.

At the second meeting it was agreed that the Working Party would initially concentrate its efforts and investigations on those groups which are unable to use conventional print materials and on how their needs for the content of conventional print materials can best be met. It was clearly understood by the Working Party that other groups of people and other materials were not being excluded from its further considerations.

The questions of defining handicapped readers and of obtaining statistics of them has occupied considerable time at Working Party meetings; however, it has been found extremely difficult to obtain any useful statistics, principally because of the difficulties in obtaining satisfactory definitions which can be easily applied for statistical purposes.

I believe it was a wise decision of the Working Party to limit its investigations, in the first place, to those groups who are unable to use conventional print materials. In this way I think it will be possible to achieve something positive, albeit on a limited scale. We should bear in mind that the written and printed word is still the most widely used method of recording knowledge and that lack of access to the printed word is a major handicap suffered by those who are unable to use conventional libraries and library materials. I do not wish to imply that the Working Party has ignored the wider scope of its terms of reference; nevertheless, it has concentrated much of its efforts so far on investigating the limited field of those who cannot use conventional print materials.

As I mentioned a few moments ago it was apparent to members of the Working Party from the outset of their deliberations that some form of national survey would be necessary to establish the current state and extent of library services to the visually and physically handicapped in Australia.

In passing, I might mention that the Canadian Task Group on Library Services to the Handicapped also found it necessary to survey, by questionnaire, the library resources in Canada. Any of you who have read that report will know of our debt in designing the questionnaire.

By the end of last year the questionnaire had been drafted and tested by ten libraries. At the end of February 1978 the questionnaire was mailed out to 719 organisations and libraries which it was thought might provide library or library-like services for the handicapped. At about the same time the mail services in New South Wales were completely disrupted for a number of weeks and this resulted in delaying what we now know to have been a rather tight timetable. We had hoped that the report would be completed by the end of June, but in fact it was only completed two or three days ago. The binding was finished yesterday afternoon.

Although responses had been received from about 70 percent of the organisations surveyed by the middle of May, replies are still trickling in. In compiling the report replies received after the end of June were not included.

SCOPE

The survey aimed to collect data on the question of library services to visually and physically handicapped people in Australia. A handicapped reader was defined as one who is significantly restricted in his or her ability to use conventional print material because of a visual handicap or because of a physical handicap which prevents him or her from holding or controlling a book.

The survey was not, however, limited exclusively to resources and services for the print handicapped as information was sought on the present situation with regard to physical access to library buildings and facilities. The survey also sought the views of respondents on the question of meeting the information, recreational, and cultural needs of the print handicapped. information was also sought on the forms of catalogues controlling collections and special materials and on the bibliographic standards conformed to in the building of those catalogues. These data will be invaluable in the development of a national union catalogue of library materials for the print handicapped.

The 719 organisations to which the survey questionnaire was mailed included all libraries of the following types which we were able to identify from available lists and directories or which were discovered by advertising or other means.

- (a) libraries and organisations primarily concerned with the welfare of handicapped people
- (b) State libraries
- (c) other public libraries
- (d) university libraries
- (e) college of advanced education (CAE) libraries
- (f) college of technical and further education (TAFE) libraries
- (g) special school libraries
- (h) government department libraries

By 30 June 1978, 509 organisations had responded either by returning a completed questionnaire or by explaining why they were ineligible. This represents an overall response rate of 71 percent. It is clear to us now that, in our efforts to survey as widely as possible, the mailing list included many welfare organisations whose activities and fields of interest were outside the scope of the survey. Some others did not have libraries.

We believe that the legitimate target for the survey can now be seen as involving about 550 organisations - about 170 fewer than the total mailed. Based on this figure, the 439 completed questionnaires returned by 30 June represent a response rate of about 80 percent. I consider that the response rate was extremely satisfactory. It indicates, I believe, that there is considerable interest and concern for library services for the handicapped in this country. In passing, I might mention that the Canadian Task Group for Library Services to the Handicapped considered that the final response rate to its survey, conducted in 1974, was satisfactory at 41 percent.

Of the 439 completed questionnaires received, 203 were received from libraries or organisations which provided special services or collections for the handicapped and 236 which did not have special collections or services. Of the 203 organisations providing special services, 161 were public library systems and 24 were welfare organisations. More than 70 percent of the public library systems surveyed provide some special collections or services for handicapped readers. We surveyed public library systems and not individual branches; so the services provided by public libraries are therefore much more widespread than the raw figures of the survey might suggest.

COLLECTIONS

Tertiary education institutions are conspicuous as non-providers of special reading materials. Only one university library and one college of advanced education library reported holdings of special materials, and it is significant that these holdings were spoken word cassettes. It is likely that other such institutions have special holdings and similar materials without realising their potential use by the print-handicapped as well as non-handicapped students and staff. It would be easy to consider the virtually complete lack in Australian academic libraries of special reading materials for the print handicapped as a lack of concern. This is clearly not the case; academic librarians made the comment that absence of materials reflected an absence of demand. In many cases it was stressed that appropriate assistance would be forthcoming if required. One college of advanced education library has produced a braille catalogue for 10 percent of its audio collection and a university library which did not complete the second part of the questionnaire indicating holdings of materials nevertheless mentioned that it held several hundred reel-to-reel tapes, mainly of periodicals articles or chapters from books. Some universities and colleges have produced leaflets for staff dealing with handicapped students. We might speculate on the wider issue of whether or not the paucity of reading materials inhibits enrolment, thus precluding the development of special collections of at least basis works in a form suitable for handicapped readers.

HOLDINGS AND MATERIALS

I now want to speak of the holdings of special materials in libraries. The figures I will use are based on those given in the answers to the questionnaires. They are therefore not completely accurate. In many cases the estimates were clearly guestimates.

The picture is further complicated because the questionnaire sought the number of titles held and not the number of volumes. The figures are almost certainly inflated by volume counts. Also, where I speak of the total number of titles held in the country I do not mean unduplicated titles. For example, large print books are widely held by public libraries and the collection of one library will be duplicated to a large extent by most other public libraries. With these warnings let's look at the figures.

In total, 215,600 titles were reported; two-thirds of these, 142,700,were large print books; 11 percent, 23,500, were in braille; 5 percent, 11,000 were Clarke and Smith talking books, and almost 14 percent, 29,700, were spoken word cassettes (including Hear a Book)

Australian public libraries have clearly accepted responsibility for the provision of large print materials. Of the 142,700 large print titles reported, 95 percent were held by public libraries and by the four State libraries which held this type of material. The 24 welfare organisations which responded held only 1,900 large print titles in total.

On the other hand, welfare organisations and special schools provide braille books. The welfare organisations have a total of 16,500 and the schools 7,000. There are no other holdings in the country except for approximately 900 titles held by the National Library in its pool of less-used braille books of continuing value which have been transferred from braille libraries in the State capitals.

Clarke and Smith talking books are held predominantly by welfare organisations - more than 80 percent of the Australian holdings. Cassettes (spoken word) including Hear a Book, on the other hand, are held predominantly by public libraries - more than 63 percent.

Holdings by State

As we might expect, the largest holdings of special materials on a State basis are held in the most populous states of New South Wales and Victoria. On a per capita basis, Victoria and Western Australia are the best served.

Holdings of books for children

The survey revealed that few titles of special materials specifically for children were held. The total was 15,700, or just more than 7 percent of the total holdings of special materials. Special schools held 47 percent of the material for children and public libraries, 42 percent.

Holdings of periodicals and newspapers

There is a remarkable paucity of special media serials (that is, periodicals and newspapers) available from libraries serving the handicapped in this country. Of the 203 libraries with special collections for the handicapped, 88 hold at least one newspaper in special format. This is, of course, usually the large print edition of The Age (Melbourne). Libraries holding special media format periodicals (other than newspapers) total 38. They take only 326 periodicals. Most of the special media periodicals are held by 13 welfare organisation libraries, which take 252 periodicals - an average of almost 20 each.

Languages

The collections of special materials are almost exclusively in the English language. Only 28 libraries reported holding any materials in languages other than English. Of these 28 libraries, 20 were public libraries. With the exception of the Randwick-Botany Joint Library, which has 270 titles in several languages, most titles held appear to be language teaching courses or aids. On the basis of the returns it is estimated that there are not more than 400 foreign language titles held in Australia.

Selection and acquisition

Only 20 libraries indicated that they have selection committees. Membership of 4 of these committees - belonging to libraries of welfare organisations - included handicapped people.

In most libraries selection is performed by the librarians and following requests by users. In 7 welfare organisation libraries, 8 public libraries, and 3 special school libraries, users' requests are subject to some restrictions because of genre or subject.

Growth of collections

During 1977 or 1976/77 the rate of growth of collections of special media materials for handicapped readers, for most types of libraries surveyed, averaged between 10 percent and 17 percent. The exception was a rate of growth of 36 percent for the 125 public library systems which answered this question. This represents an increase of 28,900 large print books and 6,700 cassettes.

Exchange or rotation of collections

Somewhat less than half (44 percent of those answering the question) of the libraries surveyed have arrangements for the exchange or rotation of special materials with other libraries, institutions, or organisations.

Cataloguing of collections

Generally speaking, the collections of special material are completely catalogued; 164 libraries reported that at least 90 percent of their collection was catalogued.

Form of catalogue

The card catalogue predominates: 153 libraries out of the 186 which answered the relevant question had one in this form. Catalogues in forms which can be used by handicapped persons are not very common: 34 libraries reported catalogues in large print; 12, catalogues in braille; and 7, tape recorded catalogues.

SERVICES

Access to materials and lending

Generally speaking, there are no restrictions on access by handicapped persons to collections of special materials in most libraries; this applies to 174 out of 203 libraries. Only 8 libraries limit the use of special materials to the premises.

Delivery of materials lent

Materials are delivered to handicapped readers by various methods: the mails, freight firms, library messengers, personal or family pick-up, and volunteer couriers are some of those used. The most common is personal or family pick-up.

It is very unusual for a reader to have to bear the cost of delivery or return of library materials (unless he or his family perform the task).

Special services to the house-bound and institutionalised readers

Services to house-bound and institutionalised readers are provided by welfare organisations and public libraries. Out of 158 public libraries, 110 provide services to house-bound readers and 106 to institutionalised readers - these services provide mainly large print materials. Of 24 welfare organisations, 11 provide services to the house-bound and 12 to readers in institutions.

Other services

Libraries which hold special materials for the handicapped and libraries which do not, may nonetheless offer services for the handicapped. Out of 402 libraries surveyed, 26 provided volunteer readers, 76 lent equipment, 81 had reading rooms with listening facilities, 65 provided extra reference and information services, and 49 provided writing and reading aids.

Production of reading materials for the handicapped

The survey found that the production of materials for the handicapped in Australia was not large. Only 25 organisations reported having produced or reproduced materials on their premises during the year 1977 or 1976/77. They comprised 13 libraries of welfare organisations, 1 public library, and 9 special schools together with Hear a Book Service Inc. and the Queensland Tape Service for the Handicapped.

Overall, 3,773 masters and 27,200 copies were produced; 1,275 braille masters were produced together with 3,100 braille copies; 416 Clarke and Smith talking books were recorded and 6,200 copies were produced; and 1,440 masters were recorded on cassettes and 16,653 copies on cassettes were produced.

PHYSICAL ACCESS

Information was sought from all libraries, whether holding special materials or not, concerning physical access to their buildings and equipment.

The survey covered 697 library facilities, by which I mean discrete locations at which library services are given. Questions were asked to determine if

- (a) the building is accessible to the physically disabled
- (b) the main service point and catalogue are functionally suitable for use by the physically handicapped
- (c) special toilets for the physically disabled are provided
- (d) parking bays are reserved for the disabled or if ample convenient parking is available.

The overall picture disclosed by the survey was that, out of 697 library facilities, 287 buildings were accessible, 314 library service points were functionally suitable, 80 had special toilets, and 326 had reserved parking bays or ample convenient parking. Twenty six facilities met all four conditions, 96 met three and 183 met none.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to give you briefly some of the findings of the National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People. I do not think that you who are working in the field will be greatly surprised by the findings. The picture the survey gives is very much that of which many of us were aware. However, there is a difference: we now have firm data on which to lay our plans for the future.

I think that there is fairly clear evidence of the essentially fragmentary and inadequate provision of library services for handicapped people in Australia. I believe that it is indisputable that the level of library service provided for the handicapped generally falls far below that enjoyed by the community generally.

This is strikingly evidenced by the almost complete lack of periodicals and foreign language materials in special formats. It is a truism to say that Australia is now a multi-cultural society with many of its people those whose mother tongue is not English. I believe that we must consider the needs of the non-English native speaker who is print handicapped. This group is likely to grow as the years pass.

May I finish on a more positive note. The replies to the questionnaire revealed a growing awareness of the needs of handicapped people for library services and a widespread desire by many librarians to improve and expand services. The many comments and suggestions we received will be important inputs to the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped.

THE PRESENT SCENE: AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS

Overseas Patterns of Service

Graham L. LAURENCE
Royal Blind Society of New South Wales

A VERY BROAD TITLE, and so I shall limit my remarks to the library services I observed in countries visited mid 1977. These included Italy, Germany, France, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, United Kingdom, Canada and USA.

To describe individual library services would be far too repetitious. In general, the European libraries, both braille and talking book (ie. audio) are funded in varying degree by the State. This varied from 75 percent upwards and in certain instances the balance was provided by a provincial government or alternatively by the community through donations. There are also State operated libraries such as the Nederlandsche Blindenbibliotheek at The Hague (The Netherlands Library for the Blind).

I believe every library visited had originated as either an agency or library for the blind, but had or was in the process of extending appropriate services to those people who are unable to read printed material. I suggest that, with the high input of Government money, it is both a proper and highly desirable development.

All libraries visited offered a wide range and choice of audio and braille material. The Australian services, by comparison, are mere pale shadows.

This is not only in the "shelf stock" title range, but more particularly, with the ready availability of current material - weekly and monthly magazines covering a wide range of interest - radio programs, sport fixtures and results, special magazines for men and women, special magazines on art and literature, etc. The majority of these being available by subscription.

Owing to relatively small populations served; economics demand that libraries are generally centralised. In the larger countries, these may be regionalised to some extent, possibly to a population of, say, 5-6 million, but anything much smaller would lose any real economy of scale.

Therefore, as in Australia, libraries for the handicapped, are, in fact, mail order libraries - postage to and from the reader is free, at least for those who are blind. Some public libraries do hold catalogues of material available from the principal library for the handicapped, but the real value of this was often questioned, as every reader appears to be issued with a catalogue, as we do in Australia.

Closed circuit TV (CCTV) is used far more extensively in Europe and the USA than in Australia. I did observe some evidence of CCTV units being provided in a library for partially sighted people.

In Europe, all audio libraries and facilities were operating on the standard commercial cassette system - 2-track 1 7/8 i.p.s. or were in the process of converting to that system, from an open reel format. Some consideration had been given to the Clarke & Smith system and the North American standard cassette 4-track 15/16 i.p.s. format. Major factors in adopting the commercial system appeared to be the satisfactory royalty arrangements made by the various governments with the Society of Authors within that country and, believe it or not, the size of the European mail boxes. Undoubtedly another factor being the cost of the cassette player which was invariably provided free of charge by the Government, if requested.

All libraries had a braille printing facility and therefore were able to produce a range of current materials which means so much to the braille reader.

Several have installed computer assisted embossers. The majority were still using the Marburg embossing presses for high volume requirements, together with a variety of ingeniously modified Perkins Braillers for automatic operation.

So much for my observations of the general scene in the European and Scandianavian countries visited. I was left with a clear impression of the vastly superior availability and range of audio and braille library services throughout these countries, when compared to those available in Australia.

To illustrate this unpalatable fact I will give some brief details of typical libraries.

NETHERLANDS LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

One of four libraries in the Netherlands (each with their own audio production facilities) - population about that of Australia.

Source of funds - 90% Government, 10% other.

Audio services

Standard cassette system, 8-10 recording studios, Telefunken equipped, using voluntary readers. Each recording is fully monitored and producing titles for recreational library, student requirements, and special request material for professional and trades people.

This facility has standardised with "in-cassette" Pentagon high speed copiers.

Reader services include - 15,000 recreational titles (a ratio of 3 per reader) and a cassette turnover of 1.7 million per annum.

A rapidly developing student service - 60,000 cassette turnover per annum.

32 different periodicals.

800 music titles, 4-5 copies of each.

Braille services

Computer assisted LED-120 unit.

10 automated Perkins Braillers, punch tape operated.

Reader services

Comprehensive range of braille literature and recreational titles is carried on shelf, mostly hand transcribed.

Some periodicals and other current material are available.

DENMARK

Population 6 million, a little larger than New South Wales.

State Printing House and Library for the Blind, Copenhagen.

Government funded.

Audio services

Three very well equipped recording studios with Telefunken recorders. Professional readers each working with a monitor as a team.

Two "in-cassette" Lyrec high speed copiers each producing 10 copies at a run, as well as reel to reel duplicators.

As this indicates, they are in the process of converting from open reel to standard cassette system for the entire library service.

Reader services

3,000 recreational titles already on cassette.

7,000 readers using the service with a title turnover of 200,000 per annum - 800,000 cassettes.

Over 300 post secondary students using a very active student services library.

A request library for special subjects exists and a small fee is charged.

"Sound Newspaper" is published twice a week and goes to the majority of library users at a nominal subscription.

Cassette play-back machines are provided free of charge by the government for library users. Only certain approved brands are available for free issue.

Braille Services

A Marburg embossing press is used to provide two weekly magazines and a radio program, which appear to be the principal current material output. 800 copies of each are provided free of charge. However a weekly newspaper also is published, together with a number of periodicals which are available by subscription only (consequently , with a much smaller circulation).

It is also interesting to note that there is a daily newspaper of 50 copies published for the population who are deaf/blind; this is provided free.

UNITED KINGDOM

As I did not visit libraries in the United Kingdom, I am unable to comment on reader services. However, I did have discussions with the managers of the Talking Book Production Department of the RNIB and spent some time with the Clarke & Smith people. The Royal National Institute for the Blind appeared so "locked into" the Clarke & Smith system that they could see no possibility of change, however desirable it may have been. Clarke & Smith were well satisfied with this situation, but were less so with the recent Canadian decision and the clear possibility of similar decisions in other areas to move away from Clarke & Smith to standard cassette systems.

CANADA

Canadian National Institute for the Blind - national library service.

Following a detailed analysis of CNIB library services and the moves required to up-date the services to an acceptable level, the CNIB in late 1976 made the decision to convert their long established Clarke & Smith based talking book service to the standard cassette 4-track format following the clear lead given by the Library of Congress.

The CNIB library had had first hand experience with both the North American format 4-track 15/16 i.p.s. and the European format of 2-track 1 7/8 i.p.s. They had been using the 4-track in their student library service for over 12 months and had been using the 2-track format for a period of 4 years prior to that. So their decision was based on experience and comments from readers.

The principal determining factors were:-

The adoption of the 4-track system by the Library of Congress, the American Printing House for the Blind, the American Foundation for the Blind, and Recording for the Blind.

Their desire to retain a closed system was certainly significant, as this undoubtedly facilitates royalty-free copyright.

Stock - major cost savings are effected with the North American format. Shelf stock of cassettes, library space and shelving, etc. are substantially lower.

Labour - lower labour costs for the library resulted with the North American system.

Convenience - the handling by blind readers is obviously simplified with fewer cassettes.

Inter-library loans from the United States. The US agencies had always been most co-operative in this area.

The adoption of identical play-back equipment obviously provides tremendous economies in the manufacture of these units.

As the CNIB library was in the process of converting to the North American system, title turnover and other statistics are not valid.

The budget for year ending June 1977 was $1.25 million and at that date over 60 permanent fulltime staff were employed.

It is interesting to note that voluntary readers are used entirely and all recordings are monitored, thus ensuring a high quality output. An important result of maintaining this quality has been the success of the CNIB in selling their recordings to the public library system of Canada and at that time there were over 100 public libraries carrying standard cassette audio books and literature with the 2-track standard speed format.

In this instance the public libraries are responsible for royalty.

The CNIB is confident that the introduction of the standard cassette system to their audio library services will enable them to offer a far greater range of current materials and request material.

Already their student and professional cassette service is in great demand and they anticipate that the whole service will be vastly improved.

The CNIB has been asked by the Canadian Government to extend its library service for the blind to the physically handicapped and those unable to read print. They have agreed to this, subject to appropriate government funding of which they were completely confident and in fact were basing their development projections on this being achieved.

Braille services

There is an extensive collection of literature, largely hand embossed, although there has been a braille embossing press operating for many years.

A LED-120 system is now installed.

A number of periodicals is produced together with children's books, music, maps, and information material for all ages. As with the audio services, request material is available and a small charge is made in each case.

Large print

It appeared to me that there was more evidence of the use of large print in the CNIB libraries than I observed elsewhere and I think that this is an important development. The Royal Blind Society has not attempted to move into this area, but has felt it is really the province of the public library system.

Funding

The CNIB funding presents a complex structure, particularly at this time as they appear to be in the process of giving the branches in each province, 8 in all, an ever increasing degree of autonomy. In this way provincial funding does become available for certain services and certainly for a provincially based library.

However, the main CNIB network is centrally based in Toronto with, of course, the free postal service throughout the dominion.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Recording for the Blind, New York

This is undoubtedly one of the most incredible cassette services available throughout the world. At the time of my visit in 1977 there were over 37,000 titles recorded on cassette.

The library caters almost entirely for student and professional requirements.

The growth and effectiveness of the service can be gauged from the following figures:-

1965/66	Service	provided	to	4,000	borrowers
1969/70	"	"	"	33,000	"
1975/76	"	"	"	140,000	"

This service is largely funded by donations and student material is provided free of charge except that the student is asked to provide one copy of the book.

For professional people in employment a charge for materials is made.

They have 29 recording studios throughout the city of New York and all readers are voluntary. Each recording is monitored, usually by a professional monitor, thus ensuring the quality.

Their experience with the more recently introduced North American format was completely satisfactory.

Library of Congress

As I have previously indicated in this paper, the Library of Congress has made the decision to discontinue progressively their present flexible discs for recreational library services and in fact pioneered the North American format.

It was admitted that there had been some problems, particularly with the elderly during the developmental and test market phases.

There seemed to be a great deal of emphasis on speech compressors, particularly as they are finding their students can operate at least 50 percent higher speed.

The Library of Congress DBPH (Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) or as they are now known - National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, have approximately one distribution centre in each state. This is normally an agency for the blind provided they have traditionally had some involvement with library services, but the distribution centre or agent may also be one of the major state library centres.

In the US I was able to observe a normal library service for the blind and print handicapped being provided, the exception being, of course, that most of the shelf stock of literature and recreational reading, both audio and braille, was drawn from the Library of Congress.

However, in the majority of cases this was augmented by "in house" production units in both audio and braille.

In the case of the principal agency in Los Angeles, excellent recording studios were being operated, producing a very wide range of current material, student cassettes, and works specially requested. Voluntary readers were used entirely, as were the monitors. As I was told "with the greatest pool of trained voices in the world, the majority not being employed continuously, we find it totally unnecessary to pay for this service".

This agency also was completely satisfied with the North American cassette format and was publishing additional magazines, periodicals,etc.

What do we have to learn from these patterns?

You will have gathered the aspect that impressed me most in the audio area was the flexibility gained with a standard cassette system as opposed to the Clarke & Smith, thus enabling the production and publication of a much wider variety of literature for all tastes and all ages.

It seemed to me very obvious additionally, that those libraries using the Clarke & Smith system were those constantly facing mechanical problems and high operating costs.

The overwhelming advantages of joining the North American "block" were obvious to us and this of course is what we are doing. Over the next 3 to 5 years we will phase out the Clarke & Smith system and issue 5,000 of the latest C.77 machines. At the same time, we plan to increase our title range from 1,800 to 5,000. A major task in itself.

We are progressively introducing other literature and the third issue of RBS Audio Magazine has now been made and a special book review tape is now available.

In the production of braille, Australia lagged behind the developing countries and it is doubtful if we will ever be able to catch up before braille literature, as we now know it, is overtaken by continuing technical advances.

However, since my return the Royal NSW Institute for Deaf and Blind Children have installed a computer assisted LED-120 braille embossing facility and the Royal Blind Society has placed an order with SAGEM for similar equipment. Unfortunately, SAGEM are experiencing some difficulty in making adequate after sales servicing arrangements in this country.

In the meantime we have a good working relationship with the Institute to produce braille material for the Royal Blind Society for our current library needs.

I am sure the patterns of library services for the blind which I observed can be adapted to suit Australian conditions.

The granting of broadcasting licences for a number of radio foundations for the print handicapped is a significant milestone. With this development, RBS has been closely involved and will continue to be, at the appropriate level.

Our decision to adopt the North American format for our audio services is a most important development for the Royal Blind Society and, of course, our library users.

We have commissioned two additional studios giving us a total of four recording studios at this date and have in operation a telex high speed "in-cassette" copier.

I am confident that we shall, and I undertake on behalf of the Royal Blind Society, to lift the threshold of literature for people who are blind throughout New South Wales & ACT and offer our complete co-operation with all other States to do likewise.

THE NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED READERS: THE BLIND

The 4 W's of Library Services for Handicapped Readers

D.L. WESTAWAY
Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Associations of Australia

INTRODUCTION

IT SEEMS TO ME, there are more similarities than differences in meeting the needs of blind and sighted readers.

Having decided my needs to receive information are no different now that I am blind to when I could see, my comments therefore, are on how best to gain access to the information of my choice.

What, Where, Who, When, seem to indicate the areas which must be considered when making recommendations to improve existing library services. It will be essential to determine, in some way, an ultimate result which will be accepted by those who possess the power to implement change.

WHAT

The most concise definition of a desirable end result I have heard is when a person can go into a library anywhere and ask for a book title in the format and language of his choice - ink print, large print, standard tape, Clarke and Smith, Library of Congress, braille - and have the library arrange to provide it.

It may be the ink print copy will be available immediately, a braille copy may be located in another city, a Clarke and Smith recorded copy in another library, and a standard cassette format would have to be prepared in response to the request.

Under some circumstances, the inquirer may wish to own the recorded copy and it should be possible for him to pay for the recording services in order to own it.

Something along the lines just mentioned seems to be acceptable to most of the interested people I have spoken to about the subject, but opinions differ widely on how to achieve it.

Up till now, recorded and brailled material has been prepared and made available mainly by organisations specialising in services to blind people. Without the initiative and sustained effort by these organisations, the service which is available today would not exist, and I believe their efforts should be recognised as well as their opinions sought.

We are therefore looking at a situation where a range of material is prepared and offered within the restrictions of copyright by a group of organisations specialising in services to blind people, with one or two exceptions.

These exceptions have developed recently to supply information to anyone who requests it or will buy it. The Hear a Book service in Tasmania is one example, and EMI selling tape recorded books on standard cassettes is another.

Copyright

In formulating recommendations to improve library services, copyright considerations will be a significant factor. For instance, if copyright restrictions stay as they are, they will limit what is possible in the network of delivery services. On the other hand, if the restrictions could be done away with, the methods of production and distribution may be extended.

If we ignore, for the moment, the copyright restrictions on distribution, apart from braille, all recorded material can be used by a person who can see, just as effectively as by a visually impaired person if they choose to do it.

There obviously is no single solution which will please everybody and all interested parties will be making some sort of compromise even if we decided to leave the system as it is.

At this point, I consider it is perhaps appropriate to draw attention to the personal performance of people with impaired vision. Their visual impairment may be the only thing individuals have in common; their needs, wishes, aspirations, and so on, are as diverse as any group in the community.

I have attempted to point out the division of informational material into braille and recorded, large print and print, the similarity of needs for blind and print handicapped people, to those with sight. Braille is a method used exclusively by blind people.

The significant point to consider at the outset is the matter of copyright. If restrictions continue as they do at present, because of copyright, it will make a difference to the range of options we can consider for changing distribution methods.

EMI are now producing recorded books for sale over the counter, and Hear a Book in Tasmania has obtained permission from the publishers, admittedly with restrictions, to record books for distribution to a wide range of readers. If it is a matter of paying the publisher and/or author a fee for using their material, has the time arrived to devise ways and

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means to do this rather than continue accepting the restrictions on distribution resulting from the kind permission of the author/nominal fee basis?

Opinions, of course, differ as to whether the existing service is satisfactory and about the changes which could be made to please some of those who are dissatisfied with the present best.

For instance, in surveys of readers using talking book services, at least 50 percent of the responders say they are satisfied with the service which exists. So, we are dealing with a topic where the initiative and work of a minority can achieve results which will benefit all.

WHERE

Production

Whilst approaches to Governments are being pursued with vigour, we should meanwhile attempt to achieve more with the resources we already have operating.

How and where the recorded material could best be produced is a big question. "How to do it?" immediately shows up the differing opinions.

One end of the range of opinions about the preferred methods is a proposal to establish a central production source, and at the other, to use all the existing recording facilities throughout the community and have them sell services to libraries as required.

The latter method, I believe, would allow the existing specialist blindness agencies to retain their present production and distribution methods. In addition, the services could be extended by local libraries buying services from recording studios, or from any other source willing to prepare material. This could be co-ordinated through a State library along the lines recommended in the submission by the National Federation of Blind Citizens.

The submission by the National Federation of Blind Citizens has recommendations on selection of material to be recorded, the importance of librarianship, the involvement of consumers in the selection-of-material process, and a section on accountability.

As I agree with their recommendations, I will not go over the same ground.

Accountability is especially important because Government indicators, such as the Senate Inquiry into Health and Welfare Services, suggest grants in the future will require agencies to outline objectives, and lay down standards, with a view to indicating how efficient and how effective the programme has been.

Cataloguing

What appears to be desirable is a catalogue produced centrally and available at all outlets in the community, through which a reader would have access to it.

Compared with ink print, there is a very limited amount of material available in recorded form. For this reason alone, it is essential that a method of cataloguing be developed which will enable a person requiring recorded material to know what exists in the format and language of his choice, anywhere in Australia or perhaps overseas.

The provision of a catalogue in recorded form would, I consider, need some special consideration. Recording the print catalogue does not seem to be a satisfactory method. It seems more difficult to cope with it audibly than scanning a catalogue visibly.

Standards

Personally, standards of excellence are desirable as a goal to aim for, but many a piece of material has been recorded at moderate standards and been very effective and acceptable to me. Accordingly, whilst I encourage the pursuit of the highest standards possible, I advocate we still leave room for some material where the content of the tape is desirable and the reading and/or recording techniques may not be quite as good.

I consider libraries will effectively have control over standards by purchasing or rejecting recorded material, both on the grounds of its content and the standard of presentation.

Specified standards should be available for perusal by any recording group and there would be no reason why an individual could not carry out recorded work to the acceptable standard and sell it if he can find a market.

Format

Opinions differ greatly on whether future developments should be based on all material using the same format, such as a standard cassette, or whether a range of formats is better. Such a range could include Clarke and Smith, standard cassettes, Library of Congress, and reel to reel.

Delivery Methods

The selection of recorded material is said to be a different process from the selection of printed books from a publisher by a trained librarian. If this is so, it is a significant factor which must be taken into account in re-designing delivery methods.

One line of thought suggests more is being made of this point than is really justified, because a trained librarian could, it seems to me, just as easily decide to buy a book in ink print or large print, standard cassette or Clarke and Smith format, according to the librarian's estimation of the library's services.

Providing production houses exist to prepare material, the management of them need not necessarily be under control of libraries. EMI, for instance, are now marketing recorded books over the counter in any shop selling recordings. They must have overcome the copyright limitations.

Book Selection

Book Selection for recording will be one of the tasks requiring special consideration, but it should not be difficult to work out a satisfactory method. For instance, if a facility exists to do a recording at short notice, inquiries from libraries for a particular book, which may be of topical interest, could be responded to quickly.

Free Postage

At the present time recorded material for use by blind people is carried free of charge by the Post Office and this is a factor which will require consideration if the same material is to be made available to all readers. The concession was probably introduced to cover the transport of braille material free of charge and there is no reason why it cannot continue.

WHO

Governments

The cost of implementing any of the changes recommended by this seminar will be a significant consideration in determining what changes can be made to improve library services.

I predict that all recommendations will include asking Governments to allocate funds to achieving the necessary developments. Most of the material prepared at this conference represents the views of special interest groups who rightly have prepared recommendations which, if implemented, would meet their communication needs.

Governments, in considering the recommendations, will necessarily rate them along with many requests for funding over a wide range of community needs. Claiming the Government should do something will not be enough. We will all need to do more by actions such as contacting local Members of Parliament throughout Australia, lobbying, and briefing others who may be influential in the Government decision making process.

For several years now, libraries have been extending their range of material by offering recorded music, large print books, and, more recently, tape recorded readings.

For these libraries to become more involved, with suitable material to convey information to disabled people, some dramatic changes would be required in the production and distribution methods. For instance, if the present copyright restrictions remain, which allow talking books to be supplied to legally blind people only, then libraries would have to check whether the reader requesting the book was, in fact, legally blind.

Librarianship

Librarianship is a skill which some critics of the present system suggest is a requirement in future services.

As against that, the staff of some existing libraries point out many of their readers leave the selection of books entirely to them when they could, in fact, discuss their needs quite easily by telephone.

We therefore seem to be working towards developing a system where the needs of disabled readers will be taken into account by library service planners. Once the service is implemented, there will be little need to mention it. For instance, the planners set up the library in a building which has access for all, including appropriate toilets, doors which can be opened by all, non-slippery floor surfaces comfortable for people on crutches, ramps with an incline manageable by wheel-chairs, adjustable lighting in some sections with ways and means of lifting books down or up for those wishing to search the shelves for themselves. There would be little need for mentioning the physical limitations of many readers.

WHEN

Action should be taken immediately to increase productivity from the resources available. This will require discussion between interested parties in an atmosphere of goodwill with a determination to achieve more, rather than putting up reasons why it cannot be done.

Determining priorities will be difficult; for instance, if ten library readers in a geriatric hospital want an Agatha Christie novel and two students at Melbourne University want a topical textbook, and there is limited money, how will it be decided who has the priority?

Setting targets to increase the library stock by a stated percentage, say 100 percent increase over the next year,seems to me to be the most likely method to achieve success because progress could be measured against the target.

SUMMARY

In summary, the objectives we should aim for in my opinion are

1 Set up library services where an individual can ask for a book title in the format and language of his choice, for loan or purchase.

2 Increased productivity from the existing braille, large print, and recording facilities.

3 Involve consumers in deciding what will be translated and prepared, and in stimulating the production of a much extended service.

4 Lobby Governments for increased financial and practical aid.

5 Establish liaison between specialist disability agencies, associations of librarians, appropriate government officers, and administrative controllers of library services; or ask a working party to list a range of options and recommend solutions; or accept, perhaps with modifications, one of the proposals put forward to this seminar.

THE NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED READERS: THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Library Services for the Handicapped - A Consumer's Report

BRUCE FORD
National Advisory Council for the Handicapped

WHEN WE BEGIN to talk about library services for the handicapped it is common for a couple of stereotypes to flash into our minds, such as

- access to buildings - ramps, sliding doors
- people in wheelchairs

The fact of the matter is that, while people in wheelchairs have their problems, and access is a major one of these, they are only a small part of the problem.

A few weeks ago I decided to do a survey on the use of the Menzies Library, on this campus, by handicapped people. I put on my overcoat, sat on the flower beds and waited - I did not have long to wait; in the first half hour two people limped up, using walking sticks and carrying brief cases. They moved slowly and appeared to be in pain, probably from arthritis. Then came a young lady, heavy with child; she ascended the steps heavily, and had to turn sideways so that her tummy was not doing battle with a heavy door. Then a battered Landrover pulled up. Out slid a bearded young man, his foot in plaster. He extracted two aluminium elbow crutches from the car and then a string bag full of books, which he grasped in his teeth. He approached the steps, sat on them backwards, and quickly lifted himself from one to the other. At the top he scrambled about, finally got to his feet, and went through the heavy glass door backwards, as he had no hands free to push it.

The next person in difficulties was a middle-aged, obese professor. In a campus purposely designed to restrict the use of cars and encourage healthy walking, he had carried a bag of books several hundred yards. When he reached the top of the steps he was pale, breathing heavily, and reaching in his pocket for the Anginine tablet which would wipe out the constricting pain of effort from his ischaemic heart.

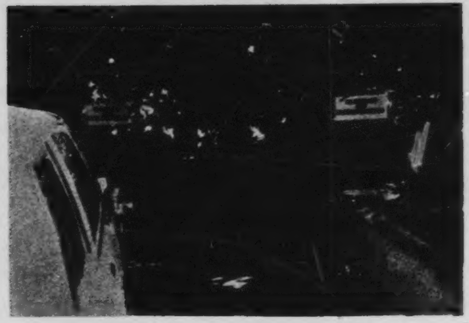
A little later along came a lady pushing a stroller, a bag of books on its back. She went up the stairs backwards, and backed through the heavy door.

Any member of this audience who knows the Menzies Library may doubt this story, because there is a small ramp to the side of the steps. On this day a car was obstructing access to the ramp.

The point of this story is that we should not regard handicapped people as a mini-minority of the population with esoteric diseases. At different times of our life the most athletic of us are likely to be temporarily handicapped. Access is not only for that very occasional person in a wheelchair; it is for convenient and comfortable movement for people who have difficulty in moving, including those who are carrying a load of heavy books.

I have always wanted to be an actor - but physically handicapped, middle-aged physicians who want to be actors are something of a glut on the market. This conference has given me the opportunity to do a little role playing, and will you now join me on one of my many visits to the Menzies Library when I was a visiting fellow at the ANU earlier this year.

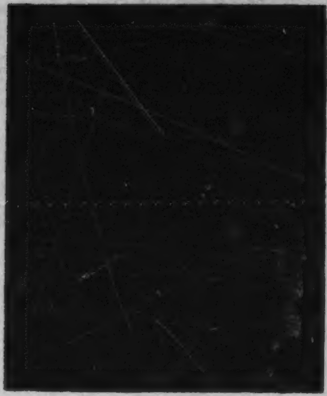
Now, to start with, let me say I am not knocking the Menzies Library. One of the reasons it is the subject of my photographic scrutiny is that it is one of the few major libraries in Canberra that I can conveniently get into. So, because of its goodness it becomes my model to demonstrate the problems of the handicapped, but independently mobile person.



I arrive. There are two reserved spots for handicapped peoples' cars. Both are full; there is nowhere to park. I sit in my car blocking the traffic until one of them moves out. The driver is an athletic looking young man with no physical handicap. I glare at him. He stares at me curiously. What am I so huffed about!

The steps, only three of them, but no handrail. I can just navigate them with my cane but it is difficult; the likelihood of falling is high.

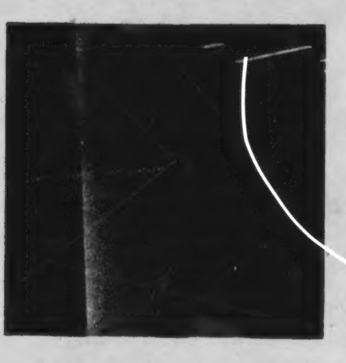
Now the door. It is heavy, the sort that you lunge at and push through with the momentum of your body. Try lunging when you are leaning on a stick, and carrying a brief case, and unsteady on your feet. I grapple with the bloody door. Sometimes some nice person holds it open for me. More often they look away, uncertain of what to do or afraid of embarrassing me.



Now at the bookstacks. The shiny surface is threatening to people with insecure gaits; walking sticks slip on it and let you down. By now my slightly deformed feet are killing me, but there's not a chair in sight. Looks pretty narrow. Glad I'm not in a wheelchair.

I want this book off the top shelf; it is heavy, and reaching it would be difficult for some handicapped people, especially those with arthritis or injuries to their necks in car accidents - the common whiplash syndrome. Bad luck if you are in a wheelchair.

However, I manage this and several others; now how to get them down to the clerk and out to my car? What can I do with my stick? I wish I had a supermarket trolley. Like Prince Charles I'm kind of stuck.



Lift not working. Someone has turned it off while loading a trolley of books. I'm stuck again.

Now to get out. The bloody door again. I really should have an armful of books. But my wife is carrying them.

Dear old Menzies Library - it really has a ramp, and is not as bad as I painted it. But, frequently untidily parked cars pull right up to the walk and obstruct access.

Thank you for bearing with me in my peregrinations around the Menzies Library. I only just made it.

Let's review some of the problems. Firstly, most handicapped people will come to the library by car. Now, cars are anathema to modern architects; they spoil the view, and so they are often at some distance from the library. If special parking areas are provided they must be policed and close to the entrance. A long walk through the basement to the goods lift often is a problem.

Steps are a complete obstruction to wheelchairs. Steps without handrails are an obstruction to even mildly handicapped people. Steps without handrails are often architectural features to a building. Eyecatching, but functional only for the very fit.

Libraries can be vast; a few chairs strategically placed will allow people with the various disabilities I have described get their breath, carrying books. A student often gets piles of books. A few light trolleys will help.

Doors should be sliding. It is easier for people carrying heavy loads, pushing trolleys, as well as handicapped people, and they are better windbreaks - if properly designed. Many modern buildings, hotels, theatres, hospitals, and airports choose them for their flexibility and safety for all people - not only the handicapped.

Open, shiny surfaces are threatening to people with precarious gaits. The Menzies Library has carpeted its ground floor.

You see, it's all a matter of avoiding stereotypes,and using common sense.

Some of the grand old libraries of the past have their public entrances deliberately raised one storey above ground level, with a ground level basement beneath them. This provided the architect with the opportunity to build an imposing entrance of a long series of steps up to the colonnaded entry porch, through the grand and gracious entrance with its impossible doors. Architectural features, rather than the necessities of design, have produced many of the obstacles of access to people who for one reason or another move with difficulty.

Modern design is concerned with function and avoids flights of steps; flat entrances are commonplace in motels, hotels, airports, and shops. Why? Because they want to get their customers in with a minimum of fuss, and comfort for everybody. The grand architectural facades, imitations of the Glory that was Greece, are no longer in vogue.

However, many of you are saddled with buildings designed in this style; some of you are saddled with buildings that were never designed at all,at least never designed to be libraries. Modifications to these buildings are difficult and expensive, and the assignment of priorities will be painful. I hope that a conference like this will raise the priorities of the handicapped. I hope this paper will loosen our minds about the definition of handicapped so that we do not think of the utility of buildings as a series of gimmicks of ramps and sliding doors, so that we do not think of the handicapped as rare and peculiar people, but we think of design as something which facilitates the movement of all people, the old with restricted mobility, the young with limited strength, the man with heart trouble, the woman with child & children. All the people - not just the beautiful people.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED READERS
How Modern Technology Can Help

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Who are the handicapped?

AS THE SEMINAR TITLE is "Library Services for the Handicapped" I thought it would be interesting to paraphrase for you a definition of "handicapped" from the United States Rehabilitation Act of 1973: A handicapped person is one who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, which includes things like communication, education, mobility, transportation, self care, adapting to housing and so on. Disabled people, it's recognised, are likely to experience difficulty in securing, retaining, or advancing in, employment.

The Act also describes as handicapped a person who has a record of such impairment and this means that although an individual may be completely recovered from a previous physical or mental handicap the attitudes of employers, supervisors, and co-workers toward that previous impairment may result in that person having difficulties in securing, retaining, or advancing in, employment. The mentally restored and those that have had heart attacks or cancer particularly often experience such difficulty.

The third section concerns people who are regarded as having such an impairment by those who have an effect on the individual's chance to secure, retain, or advance in employment, whether an actual impairment exists or not. Handicapped persons are capable of performing efficiently and effectively in any work setting ranging from factories to typical office environments and their own homes, except in certain exceptional cases. Although they can perform jobs, unemployment rates amongst the disabled are inordinately high. For those who do find work there is a tragic prevalence of under-employment. Individuals possessing valuable skills are too often relegated to inappropriate jobs which not only thwart their desires and ambitions but also deny the community the benefit of their abilities and potential.

A model library service - Louisville

With these sorts of definitions in mind I thought it would be helpful to look at one library which may serve as a model in provision of services. I want to walk you very quickly through the City of Louisville Free Public Library.

The library is a mixture of old and new building styles and it's in the centre of the city which is about the size of Adelaide. Population of the greater metropolis is around 800,000. This library is accessible via ramps for non-ambulant people. It's bright and it's spaciously open. The catalogues are easily accessible to anybody. There is lots of space in between the book stacks. Tables aren't crowded with chairs; there's room at them for wheelchairs. There is a wide range of periodicals and local and international newspapers.

This library does some unusual things - they would be unusual for Australia anyway. It lends paintings to people for 3 months so borrowers can have a changing atmosphere in their houses. It does have its own art collection with original paintings and pieces of sculpture.

There is a children's library and that is very important because children are really one of the most important assets any community has. In the children's collection there are books, periodicals, records and tapes so children are not confined to one medium. The children's library runs a story hour to which pre-schoolers or pre-kindergarten children come. There is no cost involved. The library runs a junior art gallery. It costs about a quarter (25 cents) a week to go to this junior art gallery, which is staffed by qualified art and craft instructors. In the gallery children do things like painting and pottery; a kiln and similar sorts of things are available.

The children's theatre is devoid of chairs. Just tiered floors which are simply carpeted for children to lie down on or sit down on, however they feel they would be most comfortable. There is a puppet theatre. Performances are staged by children from schools, by volunteers, and by the library's teachers. There are meeting rooms around the building. There are rooms in which films can be screened. There are no charges, of course, for community groups.

The library operates book-mobiles which care primarily for home-bound and for regional readers. They carry with them large print volumes as they trundle around the city. This library has served up to 13 branch libraries, so sorting and processing of books is a pretty busy sort of task and it is somewhat automated, with a conveyor belt carrying the books in from the book-mobiles.

There is a large 16 millimetre movie film collection to which anybody in this city has access. They will even lend you the projectors and the projectionist, if you need that support. There are all sorts of support services in the audio-visual department of the library. For instance, it maintains all of its own film collection. It doesn't have to send them away to have them repaired. In the audio-visual department there are many tape players which are connected by landline to educational institutions right across the state of Kentucky; these institutions can phone up and order replays of particular tapes at a particular time and it comes down the landline to them. This cuts down, of course, a lot of trafficking and the tapes don't have to go out of the library.

The radio mast outside the library signifies the fact that the City of Louisville Free Public Library runs two FM radio stations of its own. One broadcasts a classical program and the other one broadcasts a light program with a considerable amount of news, particularly local news as opposed to commercial network news.

In the building the lifts all have low control panels so that they're accessible by children, who of course are people handicapped by their lack of height. The control panels have their function keys brailled for people who do not read.

If we go up to the second floor in the lift, as we step out of the lift we notice that there is a long corridor running off to our right hand side and along the corridor there are some works of art. But the most important thing about this corridor is that the floor surface, as were all the previous floor surfaces as you have seen, is not the kind that gets slippery. There are two black lines, in the floor surface, tactual strips for cane users, to guide them, collision free, all the way down to the Library for the Blind and the Physically Handicapped.

It's very spaciously set out and in it there is a good illumination level to cater for people with low vision. It's staffed, if I remember correctly, by one sighted librarian and a blind cataloguer, who uses her Perkins brailler, a normal typewriter and an Optacon to do the cataloguing and filing and so on. The corridors between the book stacks, you will notice, are wide enough for wheelchairs to pass each other. The book stacks are reasonably accessible. A fairly wide range of large print, of brailled periodicals, of discs, and of tapes is on display in the library. Of course, most of the stock is out with the readership. If they ever all came in at once, I've been told, they wouldn't know quite what to do with all of it. Magazines such as the Reader's Digest are available in braille. (I have copies for anybody who wants to read last year's Readers' Digest, or other publications in braille). Teenage magazines are in braille: that's a population often forgotten about. Teenage interests can be very different from those of adults or children.

The library stocks discs which are known as flimsy discs. They are a little different from the ordinary disc in that they run at only 8 rpm. They're stamped in Louisville, at the American Printing House for the Blind. There are some chairs which are known as audio chairs - quite comfortable chairs which have head sets built into them and an arrangement permitting the listener to call downstairs to have a tape from the tape library played.

I think that probably the most interesting thing about that library is the fact that it has been operating that way since the 1950's. It didn't happen just yesterday.

Well, my job was really to talk about modern technology and what it can do. I'm taking a pretty broad perspective. I'm not going to pretend that I can cover all the topics today, so here are my thoughts on what I think might be some of the most important offerings of modern technology.

Making more of what we have now

Even at this stage, without doing very much at all, we can do some very basic and very essential things, I believe. There are so many things that are just so simple that we tend to go on ignoring them. But that kind of ignorance isn't an adequate excuse or a reason for not doing them.

Let's take a few points:

1 Modern technology makes it possible for us to detect and to diagnose psycho-physical dysfunctions or malfunctions early in life. System checks of people by the likes of the Shepherd Foundation in Melbourne, a highly technical medical service, ought to be, I think, mandatory for children to go through before they enter school. Early-life learning is a most crucial phase and that should not be ignored. By way of illustration I must tell you about what happened to my daughter when we got to Kentucky. She went to her first year of school there and it was obvious that Natalie would not have been accepted into the school unless she took along a medical certificate. You should have seen the list of about 65 items the GP had to check off. He discovered that she was a little anaemic - short of iron. We wouldn't have guessed that. I doubt whether anybody would have. She's the kind of kid that doesn't sit down for two minutes. Who would ever have thought that sort of thing? So it's important that we should be able to pick these sorts of things up before kids go to school, and the technology exists to make that detection very simple.

2 We can better use existing facilities that we already have. For instance, television newscasts could be captioned for deaf people. The side effect of that may be that a lot of other people might happen to learn to read from the captions and that's good for the entire population. News is captioned in America by the public stations.

3 We can use the new generation of video cassette units to teach things which a book can't do quite so well. Video cassette units retail at around $1,000 now, and you can get 2 1/2 hours of recording time for about $30 or less, and in colour.

4 We can record stories in sign language on video tape for as little as $12 an hour. That's all it costs if your labour doesn't cost anything.

5 We could improve children's television viewing by incorporating segments in children's time on how activity-restricted children live and learn. That's a form of community education which should start at the bottom, with the growing generation. I suggest that our public television stations are an utter disgrace in that respect - we need our ABC to involve itself with such education issues.

6 We can use the brilliance and the magnification of the television screen to enhance normal print for low vision readers with devices like the Visual-Tek. People like the RVIB school at Burwood have had units manufactured to their own requirements locally.

Current research dependent upon technological innovation

What sorts of things are looming on the horizon? One of the things that may not be all that far away is an artificial ear, using the skin as the sensory organ; our skin is a lot more sensitive than a lot of people are aware. It's been shown that people can reasonably well detect sound and discriminate the sounds adequately using the skin as the receptor. In fact, one of the people who is working on the project is in Caulfied, Melbourne.

Artificial eyes are not far away either. The Smith-Kettlewell Institute for Visual Sciences in California has for a number of years been running tests using the skin, again, as the input sense. They have used a ten-inch square of 400 points arrayed on the middle of the subject's back as the stimulus source fed by a TV camera, and after about 40 to 70 hours of practice people who have never ever seen in their lives have discriminated complex objects, talked about the texture of these objects, described their position. By the end of that 40-70 hour period they're talking about things "out there": they have externalised the objects. It's no longer something that's happening at their backs; they're talking as though they've actually been sighted people who have always seen objects because they begin to use exactly the same language and the same concepts.

There are some exciting possibilities with the corneal control of mobility and of equipment. When we were at the Kennedy Space Research Station we heard of some spin-offs from the bio-medical space program. One project described how low-powered lasers are fitted to the corners of spectacle frames and beamed at the cornea. As the eye moves, it refracts the laser beam in different ways, and this information is processed electronically. When the eye moves it's able to initiate particular actions. It's quite conceivable that this sort of thing will be used so that when a person lifts his eyes upward his wheelchair would go backwards, when he looked left it would drive left, when he looked right it would turn to go that way, and so on.

There are new forms of libraries developing, too, due to technology, and the home data bank is one thing that you are going to have on your doorstep in about ten months time or maybe less. Have you heard about Teletext? Using the normal television receiver, you will be able to push some buttons to call up on your television screen all sorts of information that are listed in page form. If you call up page 100 your TV screen will become an index: by calling pages shown on the index it will then give you the weather for your local city or across Australia, it will give you race results, stock market reports, and all those sorts of things. As well as that it can be programmed to memorise the things you want to know so that if you come in a little worse for wear at night time you can turn it on in the morning and you will still get the report as of yesterday.

Home learning through portable computer terminals is a real possibility in Australia - it's a fact in some places overseas - and this means that current concepts of school and work will have to change pretty radically in the next decade. It won't be necessary to go to school in the same way, and it won't be necessary to go into work to sit in a building for a couple of hours and then commute for about the same period of time.

A couple of other things that are just around the corner: ELTV - electroluminescent television sets. Did you know the big television set that you have at home at the moment is that size only because the picture tube is so big? These new picture tubes are solid state and they are only 1/16th of an inch thick. That means that the television set will quite conceivably fit into your pocket and the bulk of the television set except for a couple of control buttons will be the screen.

Here and now

I've talked about some of the things that are coming, but there are a number of devices currently available which do obviously have value. Audio replay is changing a lot, isn't it? The popularity winners at the moment are probably

a) the flimsy disc, the one that spins at 8 rpm. You can throw that away; it's cheap to produce because you can make a lot of them very quickly and with cheap raw materials, and

b) the Philips international compact cassette which is winning the battle against the other forms of talking books which have been available through the years.

Speech machines

There have been actual experiments trying to get people to talk faster, but that doesn't work very well. A major problem with discs and tapes is that we talk at around one-third of the speed that sighted people can read visually. That's why it's so boring to listen to people when you could be having a lot more input in a given time. We can accelerate speech with devices like the little GE tape recorder which is currently being produced by the American Printing House.

If we want to take another step in sophistication we look at speech time-compressors. The "Whirling Dervish" is not a very modern one. It was built about 1968 and it would cost something like $6,000 now. What's so different about time-compressors? They allow you to accelerate speech but you don't have that chipmunk talk which is usual when you play a tape too quickly.

Some time after the "Whirling Dervish" came the "Varispeech 2" made by Lexicon Incorporated, of Waltham, Massachusetts. That came out in 1975 and in Australia it sells for around $730. It uses an ordinary cassette; there is nothing special about the cassette; it's been recorded in the conventional way.

The next thing that came along, the next big step anyway, was the VSC-A6. Made by Variable Speech Control Company of San Francisco, it came out in 1976 and sells in Australia for around $400. It turns out to actually perform a little bit better than the Varispeech 2 as far as some tests we have run have been able to establish. VSC also makes a pitch corrector which can be hooked up to any record player or other device to get rid of that chipmunk effect. It brings the pitch back down to the normal sound so that you can recognise people's voices. With all time-compressed speech first-time listeners report an echo-like noise. That disappears very soon - within an hour or so.

Here's an Australian first for you. The next generation of time-compressors is signalled the Teknicon speech compressor, which has been out a couple of weeks. It's the first totally portable speech compressor. It will soon be available in Library of Congress format but it is not at the moment. It's truly portable because it has its own rechargeable battery supply built into it. We ran it on the test bench last week and unfortunately it looks like you're only going to get about an hour and a half out of those batteries, but it's a step in the right direction.

All of these things, as you can see, are moving out of institutional ownership sorts of categories, into personal ownership; at $6,000 you couldn't possibly imagine buying a speech compressor, but at around about $200 it is getting quite into the realm of personal ownership.

High speed cassette tape duplicators then can run off the tapes which you want. They are still expensive. Machines like the small Otari will give 5 copies of all tracks of a 60 minute cassette in about 3 minutes - that's as much as 960 minutes total listening time.

Calculators

You've probably seen, or some of you will have seen anyway, the little device called the Speech Plus talking calculator. It's a typical four function calculator with a rechargeable battery and it announces all of its entries and the results of its calculations in speech form as well as displaying them visually. It has four functions, square root, percentage and one memory. It is manufactured by TSI (Telesensory Instruments), and handled in Australia by Wormald Industries. Other speech boards are available from the Bureau for Services for the Blind in Frankfort, Kentucky, which may be applied to high level calculators as well.

Tactual devices.

The Optacon is a print-to-touch translator which raises pins driven from an optical sensing device. The pins can be felt by the index finger. People who are using it interpret the location of the raised pins to discover what letters they're reading. Reading rates aren't terrifically high but it can do a few jobs that not too many other machines are capable of doing. One can, for instance, use it to help read the visual display from an ordinary cheap calculator. It can also be used on a typewriter, or on other instruments for that matter, with the close-up lens so that a blind or low vision typist will be able to check what has been written.

An interesting, fairly new, portable braille recorder has been invented by a man named Tretiakoff. It's manufactured by Elinfa and it's called Digicassette. It's a tape recorder with a normal cassette half track 1 7/8 i.p.s. recording format. The interesting thing about it is that it has a silent brailler keyboard on it and when you work on the brailler keyboard it inputs, through a frequency shifting device, information which is recorded onto the cassette. The result is that the standard C-90 cassette will hold 300,000 braille characters, which is equal to 6 full braille volumes. It records braille or alternatively it records sound on the same cassette. On playback it displays the recorded braille one line at a time. The normal braille matrix is defined by pins which are retractable and pop up as they're energised from underneath. There are 12 characters per line with a touch key on the far right of the line to bring up the next line for display. The Digicassette can be interfaced with many electronic calculators or it can be purchased as an independent braille calculator. The Digicassette can be connected to a computer for read and write operations. Because the Digicassette has its own buffer memory, a blind person can write his own program, test it, and then transfer it into a large computer if that was thought to be a good idea. Thus it's a portable braille computer terminal, with a maximum transmission speed of 60 characters per second. It can also be interfaced with an IBM Selectric typewriter so that, for instance, a sighted typist who knows absolutely nothing about braille can type as per normal and each letter will be transformed into braille and stored on the cassette for replay. The converse operation is that a blind person can type text using the normal braille keyboard on the machine and simultaneously that text will be printed onto paper in ordinary characters by the IBM typewriter. A cassette which has been previously recorded via the braille keyboard can be re-run many times for multiple original copies, if you want to add that personalised touch to your circulars. Two Digicassettes can be connected together if you want to transfer the texts in braille and I suspect, although at this stage I am not sure, that it may be possible to high speed duplicate cassettes with the frequency shift braille on them.

There is another device similar to this called the Braillex, a German machine. It has a refreshable display of 30 characters as opposed to 12 characters; however, it costs in the order of $10,000 or $11,000 in comparison to just under $2,000 for the Digicassette.

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Computers

Computer-dependent services are becoming fairly important for handicapped people. In Kentucky I was able to witness the operation of Computer Services for the Blind. The systems I am about to describe were designed primarily for the blind but they require little or no adaptation for use with most other potential users. For the description of these computer services I am indebted to Professor Emerson Foulke*. The ARTS system - that's an acronym standing for audio response time sharing system - was developed about 5 years ago. It's a configuration of computing machinery, the intended function of which is to deliver services over telephone lines to users on a time-share basis. The user gains access to the system through a terminal. It's coupled either acoustically or by wire to his own telephone line. The terminal includes a keyboard resembling the keyboard of an IBM Selectric typewriter, which the user operates in order to address the system, and a loudspeaker over which the user hears, in spoken English, the system's response. Since the system is operated in the time-sharing mode it can accommodate many different users at the same time.

Here are some examples of services that can be provided by the ARTS system. The EDITOR program allows a blind author to create and manipulate text. He can type on his terminal keyboard and, if he wishes, his typing can be guided by the feedback provided by the vocal announcements of typed symbols. He can correct typing errors and find his place again if he forgets the last word or sentence that's been typed. He can proof-read, delete and add words when he is satisfied with his composition; he can cause one or more copies to be justified and printed and he can file the composition for later reference.

The FORM program serves the blind employee who works in a setting in which the completion of forms is a part of his occupational requirement. The standard forms used by a social worker, for instance, could be kept on file in the ARTS system. When a form has to be filled in the ARTS system reads it to the blind user an item at a time and the user supplies the information requested in each item by typing on his terminal keyboard. When he has completed the form he can cause one or more copies to be justified and printed for use by others or he can file the form for his own future reference.

The DICTIONARY program enables the user to look up words. To do so he types a word on his keyboard. If he spelt the word correctly and if it's one of the words stored in the dictionary its definition is read to him. If he spelt it incorrectly and if its incorrect spelling matches one of the common incorrect spellings stored in the computer the word is spelt back to him correctly and then defined.

The CALCULATOR program makes available to the blind user all of the functions typically provided by a modern electronic calculator. He enters the numbers and the computing instructions from his keyboard and the results of the computations are spoken to him.

The BOOK-KEEPING program provides a book-keeping service for the blind businessman. It permits him to keep a current record of business transactions and he can manipulate the data he has stored in order to develop the information he needs for business decisions. These services are just a few examples and they don't constitute the full range of services conceived for that system or what is actually offering.

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Print to Braille

Transcription of print to braille is becoming an item of considerable interest. Braille reading matter can be produced, as you would know, on a braille printing press. However, it is an expensive process and it can be justified only when there is a sufficient level of demand, and when the expression of that demand can be organised, as in the case of residential schools for the blind or library services that are centralised. But blind students in public schools and in advanced education, and practitioners in occupations and all sorts of professions will quite often need reading matter that they can't get quickly enough from a braille printing press. They have to rely on services provided by sighted volunteer workers who have learned to operate braille writing machines and to use the contracted form of the braille code. These are esoteric skills and not too many people develop them of their own volition. People who need the material have to quite often do without a book that would have been very effective to help them in their work or study if it had been available in braille. By the time they would get a traditionally brailled version quite often the need for it would have passed.

The computer, though, when it's properly programmed, can accomplish transcription of print to properly contracted Grade 2 braille and if this task is assumed by the computer anyone who knows how to type on an ordinary typewriter can produce properly contracted braille reading matter. The typist works at an ordinary typewriter keyboard; the keyboard can be on-line, in which case it is connected to the computer, or off-line, in which case it can be connected to a storage mechanism which puts appropriate codes into the storage device. The stored information produced in this manner can be retained for reading by the computer at any time when the computer is not being used for other purposes. A braille page embosser can be operated by the computer or it can be operated off-line from data which are stored in the computer.

In the system that is currently available, the teletypewriter is used to generate the input code that specifies all of the letters and punctuation marks in the printed matter that is transcribed. This input code is transformed by the computer to an output code that specifies the contractions required for Grade 2 braille and this code is recorded on a cassette. It is then reproduced on a transport connected to a braille line printer such as the LED-120 terminal, which is manufactured by Triformations Incorporated of Florida. The LED prints braille at the rate of 120 lines per minute.

Individualising teaching

For the home-bound or for the rural student interactive teaching is pretty uncommon. You probably know the norm: lessons are given by the teacher and the learner works through them alone or with an adult. They send the material in, it's corrected, and then it's returned - often weeks later. Sometimes, with handicapped children, teachers visit. An American product, the Telenote, is a writing pad with voice support. Telenote uses the normal phone line. It can be used to communicate between distant locations and gives both voice and graphic display. When the writer draws with an ordinary pen on the Telenote pad, whatever was drawn is displayed at the receiver station. At the same time as providing the display the teacher can discuss the material with the student. Telenote will even receive messages, if you like, when it is unattended and it will hold a copy of the message for you. In the San Diego school system at present one teacher handles, I think, about 13 home-bound children simultaneously with the Telenote device. Do you see what I mean about your having to change your concepts of what schools are going to be? The same device will display an image on an overhead projector so that you can talk to a large group of people from a long distance away and give them details of drawings as well as having voice communication. All you need is a telephone between the two stations.

In a similar style to this, light pencils can be used to write on television screens nowadays for computers to read the results you have written on the television screen and to help teach people who want to use computer assisted instruction.

Print to talk

One print to talk device which is not very well understood, I believe, at this stage - in fact there is a lot of confusion about it - is the Kurzweil print-to-talk machine, or KRM (Kurzweil Reading Machine). It is computer dependent but it's controlled by the reader. The reader places normal print ie. a page onto the machine and the device, using a dedicated computer, translates the print into voice output. At this stage Kurzweil says he is working on version 1 of the translator. Shortly, version 2 will be out with improved voice and pronunciation. The KRM can be asked to do other tasks. It can be asked to spell words, if you are not too sure about their spelling.

There are so many other things I'd like to talk about. One of the things I would like to show you is a voice indexing system which has recently been developed. It uses an ordinary cassette, an ordinary player, and it allows you to locate pages, chapters and so on by putting the machine into the fast forward mode. I have one excerpt here from a spoken medical dictionary. You will hear the dictionary words only announced in the fast forward position with a sort of chatter behind them. But, when the machine is put into play mode, the full meaning of the word is explained. I think you can see that has some real possibilities and, with a very small amount of money we will be able to do this sort of processing in Australia. However our present stumbling block is the funding. We need, amongst other things, all sorts of research locally: that's fairly obvious. May I briefly mention some of the other things that you can get around about at the moment that might be interesting to you? Very high fidelity head phones which use infra-red light as their transmission medium are available. As these are cordless they would allow people to move around freely in class rooms and other sorts of situations. They would be a boon to serious music listeners who have trouble with leads.

Holograms you might have heard of. They will soon be with us on a big scale. They are devices which reproduce images in three dimensions; you can walk around the image and actually check to see whether a guy has hair on top or not! Crystal lattice structures the size of sugar cubes are being developed at the moment. They will store hundreds of colour images.

There is a lot of mileage in picking the best that technology has to offer. We aren't going to do well in Australia unless we begin to operate as a consortium, for we have a relatively small population with low buying power. I hope that this seminar will provide the catalyst for the erection of a consortium which will facilitate the import and distribution of devices such I have described at rates much more attractive than is currently possible. This consortium might well also be responsible for the development of devices locally.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED READERS

Possibilities for Library Service to the Handicapped in Australia

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Chief Librarian, Braille and Talking Book Library

INTRODUCTION

WHEN VICTOR HUGO spoke of a library as "an act of faith" he was not exaggerating, and this is especially true of attempts to extend full library service to the handicapped. Our discussions during the seminar up to this point have shown how wide-ranging and difficult a problem it is. There seems to be a vast gap between what we need to achieve and what seems practically attainable. Nevertheless the very fact of our gathering here to-day affirms our belief that something significant must now be done. This is necessary not only for the present generation of handicapped Australians, but will assume increasing importance as the average age of the population rises, leisure time increases, and more handicapped students undertake tertiary education.

In asking "What are the possibilities for library service to the handicapped in Australia?" it is appropriate briefly to review some of the contributions that we have heard during the seminar so far. We shall touch on others during the course of this paper. Dr Ervin Gaines has discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the American pattern of service based on the Library of Congress. A key question for us must be, "How relevant is the U.S. model to the Australian situation?" Bill Thorn, in presenting the results of the National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People, has shown us that some good work is being done, but that at best it can only be relied upon to serve some of the people some of the time. Graham Laurence has placed before us some alternative approaches developed by overseas countries. What lessons, if any, can Australia learn from these countries, particularly Canada and Britain? Don Westaway and Dr Bruce Ford have performed the difficult task of articulating the library needs of the blind and physically handicapped groups respectively. The discussion group on "The role of library services for the handicapped" has made the point that the needs of these groups are as diverse as those of the population as a whole. Finally, Lloyd Junor has outlined technological alternatives that are available for application in library service to the handicapped. Clearly, any structure of library service that we develop must be capable of accommodating the best that present technology can offer and sufficiently flexible to adjust to future technological change.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL PROGRAMME

What has emerged from both the formal papers and the discussion is that Australia requires a co-ordinated national programme of library service to the handicapped. This is the more urgent because the potential dependence of handicapped people on library service is greater than that of the general population. In the case of the print-handicapped this is due to the exclusion of bookshops, for example, as possible information sources - and this was stressed in the submission put before you by the Federation of Blind Citizens[1]. As Dr Gaines mentioned, for deaf people the inaccessibility of aural information from the electronic media makes them more dependent on print sources, including libraries.

What are the advantages that we should expect from a national programme?

a) It should affirm the principle (expressed by many participants and in the Federation document[1]) that to-day all handicapped people have a full claim on the public or academic library facilities of the community to which they belong. From being fringe-dwellers of the library and information science community, they should be brought into the main framework of library service.

b) While raising the standards of service to the blind, it should eliminate the present differential between service to the blind and those with other disabilities. For historical and copyright reasons the services of most talking book libraries are confined to the visually handicapped. Only with the advent of the Hear a Book service did recorded books become legally available to the physically handicapped. Although physically handicapped people probably outnumber the blind population by approximately 5 to 2, the number of audio-book titles available to them is significantly less. This disparity should be rectified.

c) It should have the potential to overcome the sheer scarcity of special media materials that exists to-day - this was illustrated in the Report of the National Survey[2]. For library service which seeks to establish some degree of equality with resources available to the general community a substantial upgrading is needed. Accelerated production under public contract or on a fee-for-service basis, of core materials together with their large-scale importation and format conversion would radically improve this situation.

d) It should bring a real public library type of service to handicapped children. Outside the special schools (where much material is curriculum related) handicapped children in Australia have minimal library service available to them. Under present circumstances public libraries can offer little more than participation in story hours and some holiday activities, and the new initiative on children's books announced by Barbara Sattler on behalf of Hear a Book is to be welcomed and applauded.

e) Because of the bargaining power of a unified system it should be possible to negotiate copyright and lending right agreements that allow wider usership of audio materials. Many people (adults and children) who cannot be described as handicapped in a strict or permanent sense would benefit greatly from the opportunity to range freely across the spectrum of materials from conventional print through large print to audio books according to their need of the moment. They include people whose powers are failing through age, who are ill in hospital or at home, who are undergoing psychiatric treatment, who suffer from spells of insomnia or dizziness, or whose standard of literacy makes sustained conventional reading difficult. The segregation of talking book services for the blind makes it extremely difficult for public libraries to offer such facilities in a concerted way, although the advent of Hear a Book has considerably improved the situation. Ultimately (and it was good to see this view expressed in the Federation document[1], by the discussion group on "Delivery of library service", and by Don Westaway) it would be desirable to make the materials freely available to all users without consideration of illness or handicap, greatly enriching the overall service provided by libraries.

f) There should be a substantial improvement in bibliographic services. The discussion group on "Rationalisation of resources" and several speakers have underlined this point. At present it is very cumbersome to establish whether a given title is available in Australia or under production. The lack of even a simple joint listing indicating locations - in library jargon, a union catalogue - makes interstate co-operation among libraries for the blind something of an effort, and meaningful inter-lending virtually impossible. Without a proper national programme, this problem would be seriously compounded if more and more libraries serving a wider handicapped population became involved in this service pattern.

g) Another outcome, resulting from the availability of written standards associated with a national programme, might be solutions to the problems that library buildings pose for handicapped people. Although lip-service is paid to the need for such solutions, the results are seldom impressive. This is perhaps understandable because parking, ramps, lifts, medium-height shelving, wide aisle widths, and space for inter-shelf seating for those who tire easily, all increase the capital costs of the project (although, as the discussion group on "Design of library buildings" has established, not by as large a margin as sometimes is thought). Moreover, most library buildings already exist, and the chances of obtaining funds for improving their physical accessibility are usually slight. Standards - covering buildings, services, stock - could lay down ways of overcoming problems of access, not only through better design of buildings but also through improved service patterns to individual users. The staff implications of such service would be spelled out alongside staffing recommendations for service to the handicapped generally.

h) A national programme should result in service to the handicapped becoming a normal part of professional and sub-professional training courses in librarianship. Training offered by library schools could be supplemented by short courses offered through service organisations for the handicapped.

i) It should correct the present imbalance of private and public sector funding - this relates to the area of the discussion group on "The role of the voluntary organisations". Australian library services for the blind are funded very largely by private donations. Government contributes relatively little. The voluntary tradition is admirable and must definitely be maintained. However, charitable organisations, by their very charter or constitution, are often limited in the degree to which they can reconsider their aims, their methods and their relationship to sister services. A national programme should ensure that government at all levels assumes its due share of financial and organisational responsibility as it does in library service generally. Only within such a framework can the contribution of non-government agencies be maximised, and improved standards of service to all handicapped people be achieved.

j) It should result in a great improvement in co-ordination of effort. The present lack of co-ordination is especially damaging to Australia's ability to negotiate the best terms for copyright clearance and for procuring materials abroad. It makes our participation in international forums such as IFLA less effective; Australia will benefit from any new international arrangements only if she also contributes to them.

EXISTING PROGRAMME MODELS

What should be the shape of this national programme? Let us discuss the implications of applying various existing models to Australia - discussing first and, perhaps, at most length because it is such an impressive system, the Library of Congress system in the United States. This will be followed by a brief consideration of Canadian and British models. Finally we shall look at proposals by Duncan Marshall and other Australians.

a) Using the United States model[3] the National Library of Australia would fulfill the national duties of the Library of Congress, acting as the overall co-ordinator of library service to handicapped people. It would:

   i) Provide bibliographic services and in particular a union or joint catalogue and a national bibliography of special materials for the handicapped which could be extracted from the joint catalogue.

   ii) Commission the production of as large a quantity as possible of core public library-type materials in media for the handicapped. This would be financed by an annual grant of federal funds. It would import materials from abroad and commission format conversion where necessary.

   iii) Negotiate copyright clearance such that all these materials could be made available in a sufficient number of copies through State and public libraries and through appropriate service organisations.

   iv) Make the materials available to the States complete with cataloguing for each item.

   v) Act as the clearing house for international inter-library loans.

   vi) Set standards for services and production of materials to ensure a uniform basic level of provision throughout Australia.

vii) Administer the accreditation of volunteer readers and braillists, and compile specialist bibliographies upon request.

viii) Commission or carry out research, development and evaluation projects.

ix) Undertake in consultation with user groups representation of the interests of handicapped users of libraries both nationally and internationally.

Regional functions would be carried out by the State libraries. These would:

i) Ensure that local bibliographical information flows through to the National Library's union catalogue.

ii) Carry as core stock the material commissioned and supplied by the National Library. To supplement this they would commission the production of materials of local interest.

iii) Operate postal service directly to users in their own state, and when required serve users in other states by inter-library loan through other State libraries.

iv) Offer support to local libraries and other agencies operating services to the handicapped.

v) Operate a consultative service for students and other specialist users, referring them to appropriate service organisations and voluntary groups. Where such groups do not exist the State Library would provide the necessary service itself.

Local public libraries would:

i) Co-operate closely with institutions in the community serving handicapped people.

ii) According to local need, stock a collection of materials supplied by the State Library and distribute these either directly from the central library or via a housebound service.

iii) Provide such services as reader assistance, booklists and information.

iv) Provide print enlargers and large print typewriters, page turners and eventually devices like the Kurzweil machine for optical to audio conversion.

Educational institutions would service the special needs of handicapped students by providing enhanced staff assistance, by furnishing appropriate accommodation and equipment,and by calling upon materials provided by other libraries and organisations. The audiovisual departments of educational institutions might accept contracts for production of materials from either the National Library or the State libraries, or make their own studio facilities available for use by volunteer groups engaged in production.

Service organisations for handicapped people might provide outlets for State library materials (perhaps in alternative cassette formats) if this would assist their users. They would play a key role in

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providing library materials and personalised documentation services for students and others with specialised personal requirements. They would assist their users in obtaining appropriate aids such as Optacons, braillers, and cassette players. Some service organisations would be major contractors to the National Library and the State libraries for the production of materials.

b) The Canadian model developed in the report[4] of the Task Group on Library Service to the Handicapped (1976) modifies the US model in ways that are potentially helpful in the Australian situation. The responsibility for distribution of materials lies with the local public library and overall responsibility rests with the National Library. Thus the fringe-dweller syndrome is eliminated. Funding is based on a cost-sharing agreement between the National Library and provincial library agencies. Service to students becomes the responsibility of provincial education authorities. The role of the major service organisations for the blind, such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, is that of production of materials under contract to the library system, and research and evaluation in the field of new technology.

c) The achievements in Britain[5] of the services provided collectively by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, the National Library for the Blind, and the National Listening Library (serving the physically handicapped and hospitalised) must be recognised, although they are difficult to relate to Australian conditions. Because of the relatively low population of handicapped people in any one locality, national services based on strong central collections are economic to operate. However, the blind and physically handicapped population of Britain is still largely excluded from the mainstream of library service.

In Britain the principle of low-cost and high efficiency inherent in the concept of a very strong central collection operating through the post has been developed in the British Lending Library at Boston Spa. The British Lending Library serves chiefly academic libraries and has nothing to do with library services for the print-handicapped, but the management concepts involved are readily adaptable. In Australia, for example, a British Lending Library-type central collection, housing recreational and informational materials could supply private individuals through the post and provide public libraries with deposit stock on inter-library loan. The advantage of this model is that it would effect a high concentration of expertise and materials in a single relatively low-cost organisation. By being part of the National Library of Australia, and operating partially through local public libraries, this concept could offer the necessary links with the mainstream of library service.

d) A valuable model has been provided by Duncan Marshall[6], City Librarian of Wagga Wagga. This suggests a regionalised co-operative approach which would result in a national network of centres to provide audio materials for print-handicapped people through public libraries. While ultimately in this model costs are borne mainly from public funds channelled through the participating public libraries, a heavy ongoing commitment from federal sources is not essential. This grass-roots approach may be more politic in the Australian situation than the Library of Congress model.

e) Lloyd Junor[7] has proposed a national production and research organisation, with distribution of materials as one of its functions.

Barbara Blackman[8] has suggested a system whereby tapes owned by the user can be sent in for re-copying, combining the advantages of a library service with the opportunity to build up a private collection of tapes. Taken either in conjunction or separately, these two proposals offer interesting possibilities in the Australian context, if adequately related to the mainstream of library service.

f) Finally we should note the national model provided in Section 3 of the Federation submission. It deals particularly with:

   i) A committee structure in which consumers are particularly well represented, perhaps better than in any other system in the world.

   ii) The role of State libraries in providing multi-media service.

   iii) State production centres.

DISADVANTAGES TO BE AVOIDED

In formulating a model which is comprehensive and appropriate to Australian conditions there are certain pitfalls that we must take care to avoid:

a) The handicapped community in Australia would not be well served by a structure which looks excellent on paper but in fact fails to live up to its promise owing to financial constraints and practical difficulties. The US model, for example, implies a strong stimulus being applied from the top of the service pyramid and penetrating downwards to the local level. The success of this approach would depend on how heavily the federal government would be prepared to commit itself financially. Funding for the National Library would have to be as great (in proportion to population) as the appropriation received by the National Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Library of Congress) if such a model were to be truly effective. A model based primarily on local authority finance (e.g. the Marshall model) could suffer from a converse problem. Poorer municipalities would be able to afford only minimum provision, and serious unevenness of service could result.

b) We must be careful of the extent to which technology dictates organisational patterns and vice versa. When the Library of Congress system was founded, for example, the fundamental technology involved was press-braille materials and audio-discs. To achieve economies of scale a highly centralised selection and acquisitions programme was needed, and this, to a great extent, determined the administrative structure of the system that has been perpetuated. With computer brailling and fast tape copying it can be argued that the need for such centralisation has fallen away, and that with computer-assisted cataloguing a highly decentralised approach - almost a "cottage industry" approach - becomes feasible, as long as copyright requirements are met and bibliographic records find their way into a central pool.

c) "Big system" logistics such as those of the Library of Congress model can be seen as unnecessarily distancing the user from the administration of the programme. This could be particularly disadvantageous in respect of book selection and the speed of response to needs expressed at the local level. On the other hand local enterprises which are too small and are not linked in a formal network cannot possible provide an adequate range of materials and services.

CONCLUSION

This paper has looked fairly closely at one possible programme model, and briefly touched on four others. Several more could be proposed, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Some of the fundamental requirements of a national programme for Australia are that it should build upon and not negate what has been achieved up to now; that it should promote rational use of financial resources, whether from the public or private sector; and that it should encourage, not suppress, local initiative. It should also take full account of the geo-political realities of Australia, and particularly the tradition of autonomy within each State. On the other hand our service pattern must have sufficient cohesion to allow Australia to negotiate from a position of unity and strength in the acquisition of materials from overseas sources and in copyright arrangements. The programme must ensure that within the country all materials should be easy to locate and readily available to everyone who requires them.

In framing our programme we must bear in mind that in respect of sound recordings and of the electronic storage and retrieval of information there is a fast developing convergence between the interests of the handicapped and non-handicapped. Many public and academic libraries offer audio-visual services which include sound recordings. These could only be enhanced by the free availability to all users of materials which we currently regard as suitable for the handicapped only. The suburb-dweller driving long distances to work, the householder engaged in routine cooking and cleaning, the child accompanying parents on a car journey - all these could benefit from the availability through libraries of audio books. With increasing demand for such materials large commercial interests would engage in mass production and prices would drop. (EMI are already marketing a series of talking books through retail outlets.) Whatever programme we adopt should work towards breaking down barriers of access and thus increasing the potential usership of audio materials in libraries. For the handicapped the results of such developments would mean access to a wider range of library materials.

The education world is irreversibly committed to what Sir Eric Ashby[9] has described as "the fourth revolution" - portended by developments in electronics, notably those involving radio, television, tape recorder and computer. Lloyd Junor[7] has demonstrated in a discussion paper how an agency for research, development, and production of materials for the handicapped can interface with an educational institution which is advanced in this field. Our model should allow scope for such developments. In respect of the electronic storage and retrieval of information we already have extensive computerised records which underlie the production of catalogues in computer output microforms. Publishing to-day relies heavily on computer typesetting. Output from any computerised records such as these are potentially convertible into braille and ultimately perhaps into artificial speech. With the additional conversion of printed materials into speech through optical character recognition it is possible to visualise a future in which library services to the handicapped and non-handicapped will totally converge. It is for this future that we must prepare the way.

The first step along the path is to ensure that handicapped users are brought as far as possible into the mainstream of library service. It is crucial that the programme model we select or devise should enjoy the widest possible support of all interested parties, so that progress can be purposeful and swift. At the same time we must realise that no solution can be perfect, and that we should not lose time in striving for perfection. At this moment thousands of people, especially among the physically handicapped, are being subjected to needless tedium, social alienation and even mental suffering because of the present deficiencies in library service. Let us take caution from the words of Goethe, and move courageously to decision and action:

"Lose this day loitering, 'twill be the same story
Tomorrow, and the next more dilatory;
Each indecision brings its own delays,
And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days.
Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute!
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated.
Begin, and then the work will be completed."

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SEMINAR DISCUSSION GROUP TOPICS

GROUP 1 Leader, D. Hall	Topic A: Segregation or integration of library services for the handicapped
GROUP 2 Leader, M. Fialides	Topic B: The role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped
GROUP 3 Leader, E.E. Petersen	Topic C: Promotion of existing (and future) library services and resources available to the handicapped Topic F: Role of library services for the handicapped
GROUP 4 Leader, P. Willard	Topic D: Training for library staff who serve handicapped people
GROUP 5 Leader, R. Doust	Topic E: Rationalisation of resources (and services?) - Needs and solutions
GROUP 6 Leader, J. Brudenall	Topic F: Role of library services for the handicapped
GROUP 7 Leader, R. Drake	Topic G: Design of library buildings and facilities for the handicapped (including consideration of special aids) Topic D: Training for library staff who serve handicapped people
GROUP 8 Leader, D. Blyth	Topic H: Delivery of library service to the handicapped Topic B: The role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped

DISCUSSION GROUP 1

TOPIC A: Segregation or integration of library services for the handicapped

Definition

The initial definition of a "handicapped reader" as defined for the National Survey (reported by Mr W.D. Thorn 1/8/78) was considered too restrictive for this seminar.

Bearing in mind that many people prefer not to identify themselves as handicapped (even to obtain a satisfactory library service), we recommend that we not argue in terms of who should be recognised as "print-handicapped" etc., but let us talk of people with a need for special materials in a library service.

There is an important distinction to be made between the integration of special library materials into the public library system for purposes of access, and the segregation of production facilities to meet particular needs, using the facilities and experience already available through a variety of sources, e.g. voluntary organisations, colleges of advanced education, etc.

Special materials

We identified the materials, or formats, to be included in our needed library services as:-

> Braille and Moon books; large-print books or magazines and newspapers, leaflets and other information for daily living; picture books; wordless books; simple readers; educational toys; jig-saw puzzles, etc.; audio-materials such as tapes, cassettes, cartridges, records; access to radio and television; video-tapes; captioned films, movies, film strips; book/cassette/filmstrip sets.

We would like to see the type of audio-services envisaged, in his paper, by Mr Laurence of the Royal Blind Society extended to other people who need that material. Copyright release is a negotiable commodity, like Public Lending Rights. We have made a specific recommendation on this matter.

Users

We thought it useful to consider our potential clients in three, possibly overlapping, groups.

1 Those users of library services who require special materials and/or special services

2 Those who would use library services if they could gain access to them in a physical sense (including technological aids, as well as improved building design)

3 Those for whom library services have seemed irrelevant in the past, but who could be users given the right materials, encouragement and supporting services, including readers' advising, and the use of volunteer readers. (We had in mind especially materials geared to, e.g., mentally retarded adolescents with high-level interests but low-level reading skills.)

Integration/Segregation

We support the general philosophy of integrated library services, although identifying special groups with their particular needs. A mixed integrated/segregated system exists at the moment, and there will probably always be a role for special libraries, but we can move towards an integrated system through public education, adequate materials holding, use of technological aids, and highly professional library staff.

Clearing-House

To provide a focus for an integrated system and to avoid duplication of effort we urge the establishment of a National Clearing House, or national co-ordinating committee, to link the various services and needs, to collate information on holdings and projected developments, and to give weight to the movement for integrated services.

We envisage a multi-media library system which can distribute material for all handicaps, but with input from special interest groups, helping to produce, or define, the special facilities to cater for special needs.

A total system of library services to the handicapped depends on the assumption by the National Library of this bridging and co-ordinating role.

1 It would maintain a central composite (union) catalogue on a standard format (showing author, title, date & publisher, where it is held, if available for interlibrary loan, etc., and a summary), not only of holdings but also projected developments

2 Negotiate copyright on an Australia-wide basis

3 Make available bibliographical information and information about publishing houses, and local agents of small and specialised firms

4 Formalise standards of production

The National Library would negotiate for a suitable agency in each State and Territory, preferably the State Library or equivalent, to:

a) maintain a basic collection of materials sufficient to cover the needs of the whole state
b) provide access to a full range of bibliographies, book and periodicals indexes and selection aids in this area
c) undertake the full range of functions of a co-ordinated State library service as this relates to users with special needs, and

d) facilitate distribution of multi-media materials through existing and emerging networks.

Local libraries would be the immediate contact and resource point, and would identify the prime users, and handle ephemeral material, especially those solely of local interest.

The real need of handicapped readers is not sympathy from library staff, but a high quality of librarianship in the selection of stock and in readers' advising.

Role of LAA

In this connection we would like to see the Library Association of Australia actively involved, since it has a role in accrediting library training courses, as well as general professional development.

Role of libraries

Each library has an important role to play:

a) in public education by building up stock to assist people in understanding the handicapped, as well as providing direct services to handicapped users, and
b) in encouraging the use of public libraries by handicapped people so as to help reduce their segregation and the resulting stigma.

Other topics

The discussion group decided not to pursue in any detail other topics,but linked consideration of particular papers and the general question of physical standards for libraries with its overall examination of the issue of integration/segregation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 We recommend that the basic principle should be to incorporate into the public library system measures for access and such special materials and services as are necessary to allow usage by all people, without the need to identify themselves as handicapped.

2 In view of its experience, systems capabilities and organisational structure,the National Library should undertake a clearing-house role in the provision of the necessary materials, in particular the initiation and maintenance of a national union catalogue of holdings and projected developments of relevant materials.

3 That the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped assume responsibility for developing a standard format for feeding information to the National Union Catalogue.

4 That the Working Party negotiate separate funding for producing these necessary special materials and for the delivery of special services which take the materials to the users.

5 We recommend that the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped continue its advisory role, and that in particular the National Advisory Council for the Handicapped should further stimulate a national effort to increase the provision of special materials and services.

6 We further recommend that in order to monitor progress towards the goal of integration, the Working Party should convene another National Seminar with adequate consumer participation not later than 1981 which is the year designated by the United Nations for special effort for handicapped people.

Attachment

1 Those who need building modifications - ramps, toilets, etc.

2 Those who need "mechanical aids" to read a print book

3 Those who need increased reader-service and advice (e.g. to take books down from stacks, etc.)

4 Those who need books translated or transcribed to large print, braille, audio, video, etc.

5 Those who need books written for them - retarded adolescents, retarded readers, etc. (high-level interest - low-level reading skills)

6 Those who need "information for living" - manuals, directories, daily newspapers.

DISCUSSION GROUP 2

TOPIC B: The role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped

The Present

Those library services which are currently provided for print handicapped people (in the main visually handicapped and immobilised people) have largely been provided by voluntary organisations and, in particular, by volunteers.

These "library" services have extended far beyond the traditional confines of conventional library services. They have embraced:

- the seeking out and identification of individual clients
- the acceptance of individual and highly personalised commissions from these clients as a matter of course
- the actual production of "books" (involving transcription from normal print to a variety of media) as one-off exercises and as part of limited production runs
- the transcription of unique material, e.g. lecture notes
- the operation of full scale circulating libraries (often by mail)
- the distribution of "books" to clients by a variety of means including mail and direct delivery

The production side is, perhaps, the single most distinctive feature of these services. This activity has been necessary in the past (and continues to be so) because of the general dearth of suitable material, supply problems owing to delays, copyright difficulties, etc. and the clear need for Australiana. Even so, supply is barely scratching the surface of requirements.

It is clear that supplies of special material for print handicapped people from normal commercial sources will not be anywhere near adequate in the foreseeable future. The only exception to this observation is in the field of large print books.

The sorts of organisations which are currently providing services range through

- agencies which are limited to braille but otherwise provide a ful range of the services mentioned earlier

- agencies (generally for the blind) which provide a full range of services in a variety of media, sometimes extending their service to other categories of handicapped people, e.g. intellectually handicappped, etc.

- agencies which deliver books and special materials to homebound and hospitalised people

- agencies of a general service nature, e.g. Rotary, which provide funds, volunteers and back-up services for more specific organisations

Good Features

The group thought it worthwhile to delineate the advantages that this pattern of service, characterised by voluntary agencies, has. These are outlined below:

1 because their services are largely provided to their own members, there are good opportunities for closely matching needs and services and for adapting to changing requirements

2 as there is usually more than one organisation serving a consumer population, there is scope for choice by consumers

3 their voluntary nature and welfare orientation often enables them to attract and mobilise large numbers of volunteers to provide large parts of their services

4 this aspect, in particular, means that they should be far more cost-effective than organisations which rely predominantly on salaried personnel

5 it also means that, potentially at least, funds can be applied directly to materials and means of production (thus achieving significant outputs with limited inputs)

6 they can frequently respond quickly and flexibly to changing and emerging requirements

7 consumers can and do identify with their own organisations

8 the agencies can provide services over a range of hours in a variety of locations which could not be matched by salaried personnel

9 their ability to raise funds from the general public obviously cannot be matched by government services

10 similarly, because of their nature, they can attract government grants, donations, and bequests

11 their independence endows them with political influence and reduces the possibility of services being cut back in response to overall economy drives (as occurs in government services)

Problems and Disadvantages

Notwithstanding these good features, the problems of the present pattern are many and diverse. There are insufficient funds and other resources available, the services provided are makeshift, fragmented,uncoordinated, unnecessarily overlapping and redundant at some points with large gaps in others. All in all they are inadequate to cope with the needs of the visually handicapped let alone the broader category of print handicapped. When measuring the needs and provisions for this category against those of the non-print-handicapped it is clear that the handicapped group has the following disadvantages:

1 the normal commercial system involving selection, production and marketing does not cater for them (the significance of this point can not be overstated)

2 the general community library services do not cater for them (except marginally and in isolated instances)

3 the range of materials available to them (numbers of titles,subjects, range, level, viewpoints, etc.) is extremely restricted

4 there is very limited scope for ownership of material

5 there is a severe restriction on materials such as news, information, magazines, etc.

6 the fragmentation of production and holdings between a number of points creates problems of knowing about materials and then getting access to them.

The Future

The group considered and specifically rejected a number of models and options during its discussions. These included

- a government-run production facility
- central production facilities except as they grow up naturally
- massive government intervention in existing services
- the cessation or phasing out of service provision by voluntary organisations

Instead the group has opted for

- a continuation of the numbers and diversity of production and holding agencies
- extension of services by those agencies to the broad category of print-handicapped people
- greater co-ordination and co-operation among the agencies and between them and the general community library facilities and services
- a much greater activity on the part of general community library facilities to substantially increase their holdings of special

materials and their provisions of services to handicapped people to move them towards greater parity

- **some financial assistance to be provided by governments, either State or Federal, which will enable libraries presently servicing the handicapped to extend and improve their present services, particularly in the area of production**

Implementation

Having decided that voluntary organisations and their services will and should be a major part of the scene for the foreseeable future and that community library services should move progressively towards a total but complementary service in co-operation, it is clear that a number of things are needed in order to ensure that these things come to pass:

1. There is a need for the National Library to establish and maintain a union catalogue of special materials (e.g. braille, Moon, large print,discs,cassettes,etc.) listing titles, media, and holding bodies

2. There is a need also for a catalogue of proposed new products of special materials

3. There is a need for all holding and production agencies to actively co-operate in providing information for the catalogues of holdings and forthcoming productions

4. There is a need for all holding agencies (including general community libraries) to actively use the catalogues and to encourage inter-agency loans

5. There is a need for copyright problems to be resolved and for clearance to be obtained as necessary at one central point - possibly the National Library

6. There is a need for all community library services, educational institutions, etc. to accept that they have a responsibility as for all other citizens to initiate and maintain adequate library services for all handicapped people

7. These services should include substantial holdings of special materials, designing for access, full co-operation with production services and agency libraries, extension services,and the involvement of consumers in the design and monitoring of services. Services that need to be provided are

    - a reading room function
    - a reference library
    - a lending library
    - a bookshop service

    Radio can perform a reading room function. It is more immediate, extensive, and cheaper than any other way.

    There is, however, need for telephone access to a reference service. (Telecom should extend its range of recorded messages and accept responsibility for dissemination of its own information, e.g. post codes)

8 There is a need at State level for a body to promote these aims and to bring about the co-operation, co-ordination, planning and action needed to ensure we make the best of what we have and that we move as quickly as possible to improved services

9 These activities should be undertaken by an active group of people who are themselves directly involved in library services to the handicapped:

- producers
- holders and distributors (including State libraries)
- consumers

Their role should include approaches to State governments and local bodies.

10 At the national level there is a need for a part-time central body, associated with the National Library and serviced by a small full-time secretariat to undertake the following activities:

- to provide expert advice to the National Library on needs and services
- to provide a forum for the exchange of news
- the co-ordination of activities between States and agencies at a national level
- to draft service philosophies and prepare and endorse standards of format, technical excellence, etc.
- to act as a clearing house of information on developments of all kinds (services, technology, trends, etc.)
- the promotion of library services for the handicapped

Special Points

This discussion group would like to conclude by emphasising that there are many categories of print-handicapped with a variety of special needs. Illustrative of this variety they would point to the needs of deaf, mentally handicapped, children, teenagers and migrants - many of these need specially rewritten material (or the obtaining of abridgements) in addition to any transcription from one medium to another.

The group would also like to stress that, in their view, the solutions to many of the problems discussed at this seminar can be found by co-operation and consultation at the local and State level, independently of any report or action by the Working Party. We do not believe it is necessary to delay any further and we therefore call on those present to return to their States and take action to set up appropriate mechanisms for co-operation, co-ordination, planning, and action.

DISCUSSION GROUP 3

TOPIC C: Promotion of existing (and future) library services and resources available to the handicapped

In discussing the promotion of library services and resources available we must educate the consumer by promoting the use of and demand for services, and influence the people who have the power to make changes in order to upgrade the services available.

Identifying the consumers - Statistics

Statistics available from American surveys indicate a potential consumer population of 4 percent of total population and actual users of service of one half of one percent of total population.

In Australia a figure of 4 percent would represent approximately 560,000. Half of one percent would represent approximately 70,000.

The Consumer - Promotion of use and demand for library services

Libraries must gear themselves towards providing a service for up to 4 percent of the population. This will involve both a change in attitudes and awareness as well as a different approach to funding.

As we see it, the responsibility of promotion of library services must be focussed on the library and its staff, particularly the readers' adviser. All staff must be "tuned-in" to needs of handicapped borrowers, e.g. the variety of reading material available and special aids that can assist borrowers. The focal co-ordinating point for disseminating knowledge of specialist services within the local community would probably be the well-informed readers' adviser.

It is important that librarians responsible for services should encourage staff to make contact with groups and individuals, such as doctors, in the community to explain what they are providing and to find out how libraries can help meet the needs of consumers. They must promote themselves as one unit of the community network. To do this successfully all staff should have appropriate training within their library courses.

Outreach services to people who are house-bound or hospitalised, etc., must be as close as possible to that provided by the readers' adviser in the library. Consumers should be encouraged to provide constructive feedback on such things as language used in the book and the choice of author and reader, using an appropriate medium such as tape, paper, or phone. This feedback should also be passed on to the producers of materials to assist in selection of articles, journals or books to be produced. At present promotion is carried out on an ad hoc basis through personal contact, by voluntary agencies, by medical and para-medical people who happen to know about a particular service, and through some isolated media programs,e.g. a radio station in Launceston and occasional special programs on community access and ethnic radio stations, and newspapers, e.g. the Canberra Times fortnightly column on library services.

Promotion must use a concerted planned program on a continuing basis, perhaps by using professional personnel expert in community outreach. This promotion must use audio, visual, and tactile media and should advertise details of services available and stocks held. Book reviews should be available on radio and tape as well as in print. Perhaps aids available should also be published. Catalogues of materials should be in braille, print, and on tape and available in an easily retrievable portable format.

The providers of service and how to influence those who have the power to make change

Handicapped people are consumers whose right it is to have services equivalent to those provided to others within the community. Their service should be funded as a normal everyday service and not seen as a new or special project.

In the public sector total funds at present are allocated on a per capita basis. This distribution does not seem to be reflected in the funds allocated to providing services for the citizens who are part of the total population and who happen to be handicapped. Few public libraries would spend 4 percent of their materials budget on a complete range of suitable resources for their handicapped borrowers. It should be recommended that all libraries make it a policy to apportion their funds more equitably.

If present funding is insufficient to provide satisfactory services for present consumers then obviously increased funds will be required. Nevertheless, basic funding must come from library budgets. Additional funding may come from service clubs, welfare organisations, industry sources, foundations, and possibly additional government subsidies. Production of special material should be encouraged.

Many organisations hesitate to publicise their services and resources because these are already taxed to the full and any extended demand resulting from this promotion would be impossible to meet. It is unrealistic to discuss promotion unless libraries are given the resources of adequate funds, sufficient staff, and suitable facilities to cope with this extra demand.

Our promotion of services therefore needs to be aimed at the authorities providing services as well as the consumers.

Adequate statistics need to be obtained to gauge the likely demand on existing services. While means are devised to obtain accurate Australian statistics we can use those gathered in other countries such as the USA, as previously mentioned.

On a local level pilot schemes can also be tried to gauge the need for specialised services. Information gained by these means can be used to present a more realistic case for extending services into wider areas.

A step forward has already been made by the National Library of Australia and the Working Party through the compilation of a list of libraries holding materials for handicapped borrowers. We feel the obvious next step is to compile a detailed listing of these materials already available throughout the country, leading towards publication of an Australian union catalogue. In addition to this, the National Library should hold union catalogues from other countries. This will indicate what resources are available and where they are held and will highlight gaps.

At the same time, co-ordination of future production should be encouraged. Producers of materials could supply a central clearing house such as the National Library of Australia with their proposed production lists. This would immediately provide, without a great deal of extra finance, an expanded service by reducing unnecessary duplication.

If libraries throughout the country are going to use materials produced elsewhere, it will be necessary to promote suitable standards of production, acquisition, and presentation.

It is necessary to have a free flow of information not only about the actual material produced but also about all aspects of the provision of library services such as details of any pilot schemes conducted, reports on promotional methods used, latest copyright information, etc. It is essential therefore that regular meetings of librarians, consumers, producers, publishers, suppliers, and technologists, etc. be held and that some mechansim for sharing information between conferences be established. This must be on both national and local levels and between public and voluntary agency sectors.

Therefore we recommend

1 that national standards be drawn up for library services for handicapped people

2 that the promotion of library services to the local community be the responsibility of the lending authorities

3 that every means of interaction between consumers and providers of services be implemented from the national through to the local level

4 that it is the immediate responsibility of those who have budgetary control to ensure that an equitable proportion of current available resources to allocated to specialised needs.

DISCUSSION GROUP 4

TOPIC D: Training for library staff who serve handicapped people

Qualities and Attributes

While it was considered that the librarian's professional skills were paramount, additional desirable qualities which were considered important were empathy, awareness, sensitivity, sense of humour, patience, effective questioning, listening, and desire to help.

The group decided that there were aspects of the above that could be taught, especially in relation to effective questioning about library needs of different users. Some discussion followed about the need for librarians to know their own collections and to know of materials and resource personnel available in the wider environment.

The Present Situation

It appeared from the documentation that coverage of services to handicapped people in the library schools was brief, although it was recognised that a great deal had to be covered in a library course. The group then went on to discuss ways of supplementing what is taught in library schools. In-service training and continuing education were both advocated, in varying patterns ranging from short, compressed courses of 1-2 days to courses of 2 hours per week spread over several weeks or a teaching term. Short staff exchange periods would widen the librarian's experience in different fields. It was believed that courses should be available on topics such as sign language, the needs of specific groups of people, and on how to purchase and operate and organise A-V equipment and other special materials. The need to call on expertise outside traditional librarianship was stressed.

Sensitisation of Library Staff

The group believed that not only library staff, but the whole community should ideally be sensitised to the needs of handicapped people. Ways in which library staff could be "sensitised" are:

- visits to institutions, e.g. schools, residential facilities, etc. by students to see at first hand the difficulties experienced and to discuss needs
- meeting adult handicapped groups to discuss at first hand their needs and desires

- simulation involving such things as being confined to a wheelchair and then being told to go about normal daily activities
- lecturing and reading in the areas of specific needs.

Who needs training?

Ideally, everyone working in a library should have training appropriate to the work they are performing. There should be a fully qualified librarian in charge. For effective training, the library schools should have access to a large representative collection of A-V hardware,software in multi-media kits, and bibliographical source material.

Suggestions for type of course

The existing basic library courses are considered to be sufficiently long. Continuing education was advocated. Both the LAA and the library schools were seen to have a role in continuing education.

PAPERS BY MR DON WESTAWAY AND DR BRUCE FORD

After consideration of the morning's papers and our particular brief on training, the group decided there was a need for multi-media library services available to all citizens. This led to the consideration of training requirements because library staff were needing new skills.

Backup facilities were envisaged in the form of a multi-media centre in each State, to assist schools, public libraries and anybody else involved in the making of decisions on the purchase of materials and evaluation of materials. The centre was seen to have the function of promoting community awareness about what is available and how it may be used. It would also have an information dissemination function. The services of the centre should be available to librarians, parents, volunteers, consumers, therapists and library staff in training. The centre should be non-partisan, under the auspices of the National Library of Australia. It may be possible to operate such a centre in conjunction with a production unit. It should have competent trained staff. An existing collection or centre could be used as the basis of a multi-media centre in each State.

Recommendation to the Working Party that standard AS 1428 (1977) be made mandatory for all buildings to be used as libraries. Any government subsidy to be dependent on compliance with this standard.

We also recommend that ACROD's support be enlisted in implementing this recommendation.

Recommendation that all special schools be eligible to have a teacher librarian on the staff, and that special teachers be released to take a teacher librarianship course.

DISCUSSION GROUP 5

TOPIC E: Rationalisation of resources (and services?) - Needs and solutions

Rationalisation

Although the group felt that there is no need for a large national centre for resources, there is a need to identify total resources. Providers of services should avoid duplication by sending information to a central clearing-house stating what materials are held, where they are held, and what materials they propose to acquire.

The centre would produce a union catalogue of materials in all special formats and would also act as a national co-ordinator of services, perhaps handling copyright permissions. This seemed to be an obvious role for the National Library.

More effective use of existing production centres should be encouraged by increased financial support. Numbers are not great and no large sums of money would be involved.

Standards

The group realised three sets of standards would have to be considered: technical, service, and bibliographical.

Technical standards for braille production are easier to define and a written code exists. Various means of ensuring that audio materials reach a high enough standard for acceptance both at home and overseas were discussed, including the use of studios with constant monitoring and the auditioning of professional readers. The position of the Hear a Book type of operation was mentioned in this context but not fully explored.

Discussing service standards, particularly in regard to braille, storage problems were recognised and the possibility of such aids as the Digicassette coming into general use was looked at. It might be necessary for purchase of these to be subsidised.

Inter-library loans and international borrowing should be encouraged and the need to promote services was demonstrated.

The possibility of service through public libraries was discussed. Hear a Book cassettes for handicapped people are in many public libraries but the number of titles is small and the collection is soon "read out". Some public libraries are setting up services for housebound people, many of whom are handicapped. Audio material could be delivered as a part of this service.

The implications of computer production of braille

Due to the small proportion of the blind population who read braille, the advantages of high volume production would seem to be best suited to current material such as journals and newspapers. If, in the future, publishers were to make available the computer tapes used in printing, these could be used to produce braille copies.

Copyright

Under proposed new legislation it will not be necessary to seek permission to copy for some handicapped readers but a record must be kept. This record, kept at a central point, could serve to prevent duplication. Authors see the proposal as an erosion of their rights and other alternatives are to use copyright-free material in a closed format for a limited clientele or pay the copyright owners a fee.

The possibility of applying a scheme such as Public Lending Right was considered.

The group was of the opinion that greater use of audio materials would be encouraged if the copyright owners were recompensed.

The group also noted that when material is purchased from overseas copyright clearance might have to be re-negotiated for Australian distribution if the original permission does extend to this country.

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DISCUSSION GROUP 6

TOPIC F: Role of library services for the handicapped

The discussion group has prepared the following list of objectives for libraries serving the handicapped and recommends their adoption by the Working Party.

Objectives

1 Libraries will provide handicapped people with a range of services, equivalent in scope and quality to the range of services provided to the general community. This will ensure for the handicapped reader access to library materials to meet his or her educational, informational, recreational, vocational, and self-development needs.

2 In order to achieve parity in library service between handicapped users and general users of the library, it will frequently be necessary for the library to provide appropriate facilities as well as specialised supporting service and assistance.

3 Library services for the handicapped should be closely linked to a realistic and current assessment of user needs. Effective consultative machinery is required in order to ensure that the services provided are what the users themselves want. For instance, the views of users must be incorporated in the selection of library material for the handicapped.

The discussion group stresses that a national research project on a continuing basis is essential to ascertain both immediate and future needs in order to plan for effective delivery of services to the handicapped.

4 It is essential that libraries provide full access to handicapped readers. This implies not only physical access to and within the building, but an assurance that appropriate bibliographic tools, material in a variety of formats, and professional guidance in locating desired library material, is available.

5 Professional library services must be available. This involves the understanding of problems of handicapped people by library staff, who should be appropriately trained and provided in adequate numbers to cope with the demands of an intensive and personalised library service, at all times.

There are implications both for library school curricula and in-service training programs if staffing standards are to be generally improved and maintained.

6 In providing reference and information services to handicapped people, libraries will be required to meet special needs through referral to and liaison with other information agencies. This may involve the capacity to produce responses in non-print formats.

7 In selecting material for the collection, close consultation with users is essential. It is implied in the first objective that library material will be available in various formats for handicapped people including:-

- current books, including best-sellers
- basic and standard works held in the library in print form
- a varied selection of periodicals

8 Effective bibliographic control is essential to ensure reasonable access to the collection. The catalogue, however, ought to be in a form which will enable handicapped people to use it themselves. Libraries should co-operate regionally and nationally in building and maintaining union catalogues of special format material, including proposed titles or materials in production.

9 Communication with users must be close and frequent, not simply for selection advice, identification of emerging needs, or feedback on the effectiveness of existing services, but also to ensure that all potential users are aware of the services available and the materials currently being added to the collection. This may be done by newsletters,annotated reading lists, and the widest possible use of the media - radio, television, and newspapers.

10 The library should also extend its publicity to ensure that the general public becomes more aware of the library services available to them and of the special facilities and assistance which assures handicapped people of the same services.

11 Libraries should be sufficiently flexible to enable people who are temporarily handicapped in their use of conventional materials to use the library's special equipment and materials.

12 Library services to the handicapped, like other services, should be regularly evaluated for their effectiveness in order that system and service improvements might be implemented.

The variety of librarianship

The discussion group recognises that libraries of different types will place particular emphases on materials selected and services offered. It is hoped that each individual library will provide written objectives for its services to handicapped people in line with the general objectives proposed by the discussion group.

It is not desirable to distinguish between the library needs of one group and another in order to establish priorities for development. Preferably, the interest of all librarians will be awakened by this seminar and the report of the Working Party so that every handicapped user will enjoy a gradual improvement in the services being offered.

The Library Association of Australia could usefully sponsor the across-the-board regeneration of services for the handicapped by drawing the attention of all of its members from time to time to the basic objectives proposed by this group.

Crucial to the success of any library service is a willingness on the part of libraries to share resources and co-operate with each other. With expensive and scarce materials on the one hand, and intensive levels of demand on the other, sharing and co-operating in the provision of library services for the handicapped is especially important. The most useful initial demonstration of a willingness to co-operate would be the creation of the mechanisms - union catalogues and registers of titles for brailling or recording - through joint effort.

A prompt beginning with the research project mentioned in Objective 3 above, would enable the right start to be made.

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DISCUSSION GROUP 7

TOPIC G: Design of library buildings and facilities for the handicapped (including consideration of special aids)

Aims of the report

In the discussion of the Australian Standard as it deals with improved access to public buildings, the aims were:-

1 To exchange ideas between users and librarians

2 To underline to librarians what the implications of the Standard are

3 To explain the implications of the Standard as they apply to the providers of service to the library users

4 To suggest a few ideas on how library buildings and facilities could be improved

5 To suggest how we can obtain suitable library buildings in the future

6 To consider other aspects such as the siting of libraries.

Introduction

i) In defining access for the handicapped our group took a global approach. Access was a physical consideration and took into account removal of all physical impediments which would impede the mobility of any member of the community while using the library, i.e. disability can be broadened to include those with broken legs, heart conditions, arthritis, those who are pregnant, elderly or carrying heavy books.

ii) The Standard which our group studied establishes a number of minimum and recommended requirements for items such as width of aisles, minimum landing size, car parking facilities, use of ramps, doorways, toilet facilities, etc. They are based on requirements of the person in the wheelchair, presumably because it is assumed that the wheelchair-bound person has the greatest requirements. This, in fact, leaves some areas neglected, for example, the need for adequate directional aids for the visually impaired is not mentioned.

Implications of the standard for new buildings

With one major exception - that of the height of shelving - the group found the Standard to be fairly modest in its requirements and easily fitted into building specifications at minimal cost.

The shelving requirements as suggested in the Standard are as follows:-

> For the ambulant disabled the shelves should be no lower than 700 mm off the floor and no higher than 1500 mm.
> For the wheelchair user, the shelves should be no lower than 450 mm and no higher than 1200 mm.

Obviously, these suggestions would have serious implications for the amount of shelving floor space required in a library, and though public libraries, where possible, aspire to low profile shelving with raised bottom shelves, it is unlikely that academic or large reference libraries could pay much regard to this.

We suggest therefore that efforts be made to explore technological possibilities further, in order to bring top and bottom shelves to within reach of those with limited movement. This could perhaps be done by mechanical means or a variation of a pulley system.

The question of whether to install lifts in new buildings has a number of aspects to be considered. Cost of installation and maintenance is a problem for library administrators, but this is offset by the knowledge that the elderly and the disabled are or could become the most frequent users of library services. Other alternatives to lifts were considered, including the use of a chair-lift to climb stairs. However, it was decided that lifts were preferable, despite some users' fears, because they are more popularly accepted as a means of movement from floor to floor. If funds are a problem, then provision could be made for the installation of an elevator shaft,so that a full service could be operating later when economic pressure is less. The possibility of internal ramps as a cheaper alternative was also temporarily entertained, but the large space needed to fulfil the requirement of a gradient of 1 in 12, made the suggestion impracticable. Moving walkways and escalators, because of their danger, were definitely discouraged.

Lifts and shelving are high cost items, and hence implications for the success of gaining funds must be kept in mind. However, estimates given indicate that many of the standards are relatively inexpensive to adopt when compared with total construction cost and often are simply a matter of commonsense. One architectural quote indicated that not more than 3 percent of the total construction cost would be involved in making provision for easy access by the disabled.

It was also confirmed that many problems of access in existing libraries were created for architectural considerations of structural beauty rather than practical needs. There is rarely a need to introduce steps to the entrance of a library as either excavation or filling can obviate the need.

Implications of the standard for existing buildings

There needs to be a balance made between the cost of conversion so the building is more accessible, and the provision of extra staff allocation to offset the difficulties encountered by the disabled in the library. The financial commitments of alterations to existing buildings are heavy, and it is argued by some that they are unnecessary if the staff is available to cope with the extra demands made by the disabled. Conversion may be very difficult because of inherent problems in the site location, for instance, there may not be enough room for a ramp with the required gradient without intruding on surrounding property.

Looking now at the problem from the disabled person's point of view, one sees that he is disadvantaged because of inaccessible terrain,even though he may have the services of a trained empathetic and attentive librarian. Firstly, he may not even be able to get into the library to make the initial contact; secondly, his need for independence and his wish that he should not be the subject of outstandingly different attention is disrespected; and, thirdly, his ability to browse is severely limited.

Conscious of all these considerations, the group recognised the need for a compromise, weighted in favour of the elderly and disabled client.

Is the Standard satisfactory?

It was found that the Standard was very wheelchair-oriented, despite the fact that people in wheelchairs form only a small part of the disabled population. The requirements of the blind and partially sighted were not taken into account. However the Standard is useful as a guideline and is supported by the group, subject to the limitations of its scope.

It is appropriate now to make a checklist of additional comments and criticisms of the Standard.

a) When considering the width of aisles between shelves, one should allow for extra protrusion of "feet" on some shelf models.

b) There is no mention of the need for public telephones installed at a lower height for the wheelchair-bound.

c) The Standard does not deal with the problem of doors adequately. There is often a conflict of interests among the disability groups as to what type of door is suitable. For the blind,it is necessary to keep doors completely shut or wholly open. Therefore, it would seem that spring-back doors would be the answer. However, heavy spring doors are difficult to negotiate for the wheelchair-bound, despite the fact that tension on the door can be adjusted. Hence either sliding doors, or better still, automatic sliding doors whether operated by pressure pad or radar, are highly recommended.

d) Direct access from the entrance to the street would be advisable, if possible, for those not needing car park facilities.

e) In site selection, consideration should be given to the availability of tactile and aural signals to assist in the crossing of the street.

f) There was no mention of the need for built-in aural floor identifiers for the use of the blind in lifts.

g) Provision should be made for sound-proofed, wheelchair-accessible carrels for study. This was not mentioned in the Standard.

h) The design of the building should also cater for the needs of handicapped staff as well as library users.

Suggested requirements for furniture and fittings

The suggested requirements for furniture and fittings in libraries as seen by the group are as follows:-

1 Toilets for the disabled should be uni-sex to allow more freedom for

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the helper/companion of the handicapped person who may be of the opposite sex.

2 Lifts should have safety doors operated by electric beam. Handrails should be installed in lifts and button indicators as well as emergency telephones should be within reach of the wheelchair-bound person. There should be aural signals for the blind to indicate the various floor levels and embossed numerals to show the location on the buttons.

3 Signs: There should be more tactile signs and directions placed at eye-level. Special attention should be given to the size of the print and the colouring. An example of such signing is the shelf-list numbers at the end of the bookshelves.

4 Bags: The disabled person should be permitted to take bags into the library for ease of carrying material. Security could be safeguarded by the use of the "tattle-tape" system, but this was not thought the best innovation by all members of the group.

5 Catalogues: It was generally felt that the height of most catalogues was not a significant problem for most wheelchair users. The type of card catalogue cabinet supported on four separate legs was considered good for front-on access by wheelchairs, instead of the less preferred side-on access which is necessitated by the many solidly based cabinets. Tables should be placed nearby for the resting of catalogue drawers.

6 Bench top levels at reference desks should not be so high as to obstruct the wheelchair user's vision.

7 Intercom phones connected to the reference desk could be placed near shelves for the use of the disabled and, in fact, any user who has any difficulties in finding or obtaining material. This would be especially useful on floors which were not served by reference staff.

8 Furniture: Casual movement of furniture should not be allowed for the sake of the blind person who relies a great deal on the consistency of his surroundings from one day to the next.

9 Light: The intensity of light would have to be examined with particular reference to the partially sighted. A recommendation deserving serious consideration, is the provision of an additional reading lamp when it is required.

10 Slightly raised metallic strips are to be placed near steps, handrails and ramps as warning signals to the blind. Colour and texture changes were not considered useful.

11 Shopping trolleys are useful for carrying library materials for the ambulant, especially those who may only have the effective use of one hand.

12 Wheelchair: The provision of a wheelchair would be a godsend for the disabled or elderly, who tire while using the library, or for those who normally use chairs but find the entrance inaccessible.

13 Seating is necessary for the rest and relaxation of tired users.

14 Shelving should not be scattered because of the difficulty of covering distances by the physically disabled and of finding one's way if visually impaired.

15 Lifts: It is recommended, where possible, to have a lift where the building has two or more storeys.

16 Glass doors are difficult for the partially sighted to see. Either better warnings are to be erected, or coloured glass could be installed.

17 On-line catalogues: The development of on-line access to catalogues/data bases, with large print, tactile, and audio output should be encouraged in academic and research libraries in the future.

18 Sturdy shelving is necessary to withstand pressure exerted on it by clients, especially those with unsteady gait.

Provision of aids

The group suggested that a full range of audio-visual equipment be made available, especially to the disabled, including print magnifiers, soundproof carrels, large print typewriters, a fast cassette copier, and a room and staff for the purpose of reading to the print handicapped.

How will future buildings become accessible?

The group recommended that standards be adopted as legislation for building regulations throughout Australia. In the meantime, every effort should be made to encourage architects, hospital administrators, librarians, etc., to use suitable standards on a voluntary basis.

The group also strongly urged that special consideration be given by the Working Party to the idea of the establishment of specialised access standards for libraries.

TOPIC D: Training for library staff who serve handicapped people

1 Principal need: Sensitivity training for all librarians (ie. public, university, special, etc.) therefore part of library training. Those library schools not currently doing enough about this may have been alerted by the questionnaire, to the need to do more. This means would therefore take care of librarians of the future.

2 Although librarians of all types of library will at some time deal with the temporarily or permanently handicapped, public librarians - as those serving the whole community - will deal with greater numbers of handicapped. Therefore public librarians need training now. This should be "sensitivity training" and could be organised in each public library most effectively if a film, or preferably a videotape, were made available as a form of in-service training on public library premises, for benefit of present - and new - staff.

NB It is sensitivity to people which is required - sensitivity to special needs (e.g., of the handicapped) will follow.

3 State branches of the LAA could be approached to conduct seminars (as part of their continuing education programs) on the needs of the handicapped. These could be organised in conjunction with a local welfare organisation which could see that the seminars followed the right lines and used those speakers with specialised knowledge of topics to be

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covered. By using State Branch Councils in the planning it would be possible to see that librarians in all types of library had the opportunity to participate.

4 It is necessary to see that public library management sees the need for special attention to the handicapped, which is likely to require greater staff provision. If that staff is not made available - if management is not convinced of the need - planning may come to nought.

5 What sort of training? Sensitivity training (as aforesaid) for all staff serving the public directly. Also, at least in the HQ of large public library systems, training in the technology of aids to the handicapped for the technical or AV librarians.

6 A member suggested an exchange of staff between libraries and agencies, to enable each group to understand the other's problems.

ADDENDUM

As an addendum to both the topics it discussed the group puts forward the following recommendation:-

> That copies of Dr Bruce Ford's slide presentation on difficulties encountered by the handicapped in libraries, together with a co-ordinated cassette commentary, be made available with two groups particularly in mind:
>
> a) architectural firms with briefs to design new public library buildings - so that architects may be made aware of the special needs of the handicapped, as architects sometimes (often?) have more say than librarians concerning design, and
>
> b) library staff to heighten their awareness of disabled persons' problems. The tape-slide sequence would be suitable as resource material for in-service training.

DISCUSSION GROUP 8

TOPIC H: Delivery of library service to the handicapped

In conjunction with specialist agencies, the public library system is, in our view, judged to be the best medium for the distribution of library services to the handicapped.

We suggest that the services provided to the handicapped be decentralised. The success of this would depend to a large degree on the introduction of a uniform system of cataloguing for audio and braille materials, and the establishment of a union catalogue.

Library services must be delivered according to the needs of the individual. For example, the effectiveness of a book on electronics to a blind person in providing detailed information is limited to the ability of the reader to make it understandable to the listener. If the book was brailled and as many as possible of the diagrams therein were inserted, the braille reader might be able to grasp the concepts more readily than he would if the book were on tape.

So that services can be made known to the community, it is recommended that the Working Party investigate the possibility of seeking advice from experts in promotion, e.g. National Public Relations Institute, Association of Advertising Agencies. It is considered that services can be promoted using traditional approaches to interested community groups, TV, radio, and newspapers.

It is necessary to remember that the style of the message be made appropriate in terms of gearing the information as a direct or indirect message. Further, it could be recommended to television stations to take into account that many of their viewers are deaf or blind.

Whilst the establishment of special radio stations is applauded, the Working Party is urged to overcome copyright restrictions with a view to all stations having unrestricted access. We would like to draw to the attention of the Working Party the importance of the establishment of these radio stations for the print-handicapped. Radio is now generally available in restricted frequencies. In Western Australia the Library of the Air operates on standard frequency. Radio is considered an important medium for the transmission of topical information, short stories, and full length books.

On the larger question of copyright, the Working Party is asked to investigate the production of audio material so that unrestricted distribution can be obtained. To achieve this it is recommended that the Working Party, notwithstanding the projected copyright legislation, investigate the feasibility of unrestricted commercial copyright clearance as distinct from the present methods of nominal or free copyright. It is also recommended that the Working Party note the experience of Hear a Book and David Catterns in their investigation of copyright.

On the question of trained staff we considered it essential that library training must enable professional librarians to relate to handicapped people. We agreed that this would have a bearing on the quality of service given. As part of their normal information and referral role all public librarians must be fully informed on what specialist agencies are available and what services and equipment are provided. Some equipment could be available in libraries, for example, page turners, magnifying glasses, and special reading lamps.

TOPIC B: The role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped

We support the concept of voluntary agencies. The use of their production capacity on a paid basis would not only extend services to the community but also improve the standards of their existing services. We agreed that volunteers should be provided with training programs and that high standards of service should be encouraged. It is envisaged that volunteers may achieve a level of competence through either qualifications or experience.

General comments

Finally, it is recommended that the structure of the Working Party be redefined to form an executive group of four drawn from the existing Working Party and to add the following sub-committees:

Production
Distribution
Finance
Consumers
Copyright
Administration

APPENDIX I

SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Ms Ruth Andrews, Noah's Ark Toy Library, Geelong
Miss Margaret C. Aston, Department of Social Security, Canberra
David Barron, National Library of Australia
John Bay, Handicapped Persons Bureau NSW
Miss P. Beadle, Royal Blind Society of NSW
Miss Margaret Bell, State Library of SA
John Berryman, Royal NSW Institute for Deaf & Blind Children
R.J. Black, Department of Social Security, Canberra
Mrs B. Blackman, National Federation of Blind Citizens
David Blyth, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Miss Wendy Bromell, Burnside Public Library, SA
John Brudenall, Library Association of Australia
Mrs Barbara Burke, Wahroonga, NSW
Mrs Lesley Burnett, Spastic Centre of NSW
W.C. Byrne, Royal Blind Society of NSW
Ms J. Cannon, Department of Social Security, Canberra
David Catterns, Australian Copyright Council
Mrs Charles Caufield, ACT Liaison Group of the Royal Blind Society of NSW
Mrs Shelagh Champion, Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled
Dr George Chandler, National Library of Australia
Miss Heather Coombes, Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled
Miss Eva Cooper, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Ivan Cribb, National Guide Dog & Mobility Centre
Miss Juliana Cronin, Canberra Public Library Service
Paul A. Cullen, Royal Blind Society of NSW
Senator Gordon S. Davidson, National Library Council
Miss Sylvia Dicker, Schools Commission, Canberra
R.F. Doust, State Library of NSW
Richard Drake, Wollongong City Library
Mrs Kathleen Edwards, Yooralla Society of Victoria
Miss J.M. Emmerson, Regency Park Centre for Physically Handicapped Children, SA
Mrs J.M. Fialides, Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind
Dr Bruce Ford, Caulfield Rehabilitation Hospital, Vic.
Ms Anne Foster, Burwood State College, Vic.
Dr E.J. Gaines, Cleveland Public Library, Ohio, USA
Peter Granleese, University of NSW
Gordon J. Griffin, State Library of Tasmania
David Hall, Department of Social Security, Canberra
Miss Edna E. Haynes, Braille and Talking Book Library, Melbourne
B. Hewitt, Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind
Mrs M. Hewitt, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Fred T. Hill, National Advisory Council for the Handicapped
K.A.R. Horn, Library Council of Victoria
Hugh Jeffrey, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Mrs Shirley Jones, Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Associations of Australia
Lloyd Junor, Melbourne State College
Senator John W. Knight
Andrew Langford, Blindness Resource Centre, Canberra
Graham L. Laurence, Royal Blind Society of NSW
Clifford Law, State Library of Queensland
Mrs J. Lawler, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Ms Merridy Lawlor, State Library of SA
Mrs J. Ledermann, Royal Blind Society of NSW
Mrs S.W. Leitch, SPELD ACT
Mrs Jessie Leonard, ACT Liaison Group of the Royal Blind Society of NSW

Mrs P. McCormick, Royal Tasmanian Society for the Blind and Deaf
Kevin McGuire, Australian Association for the Mentally Retarded, Inc.
Ms M.P. Malthus, Blacktown Municipal Library, NSW
Miss A. Martin, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Miss Barbara Mew, Rydalmere Hospital, NSW
Mrs R.W. Mills, Braille & Talking Book Library, Melbourne
Mrs Patricia Morgan, St Lucy's School for Blind and Visually Handicapped Children
Mrs Norma Morton, Yooralla Society of Victoria
J. Moulos, University of NSW
Ms Lynette Nasir, Department of Youth & Community Services NSW
Miss Lois Nichol, Australian Red Cross Society
David P. Page, ACT Liaison Group of the Royal Blind Society of NSW
Miss Norma Pearce, Yooralla Special School, Melbourne
Mrs Jewel Pels, Willoughby Municipal Library, NSW
E.E. Petersen, Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind
Miss Dianne Reilly, State Library of Victoria
Mrs Dawn Richardson, Canberra Public Library Service
Mrs Maria Roncan, Newborough, Vic.
Ms J. Ryan, St Lucia, Qld.
Mrs Barbara Sattler, Hear a Book Service Inc. (Tas.)
Tony Saunders, Hear a Book Service Inc. (Tas.)
D.E. Schauder, Prahran College of Advanced Education, Vic.
Ms S. Shean, City of Sydney Public Library
Harry Shore, Attorney General's Department, Canberra
Ms Joan Simmonds, Braille & Talking Book Library, Melbourne
Mrs Gillian Smith, Association for the Blind WA (Inc.)
Mrs Sophia Stebbing, City of Enfield Public Library, SA
Mrs R. Stephens, National Federation of Blind Citizens
Mrs G. Stephensen, Queensland Braille Writing Association
Mrs Maida Stern, Slow Learning Children's Group of WA
Mrs Linda Stevenson, Melbourne City Libraries
Peter Stevenson, Hear a Book Service Inc. (Tas.)
Thomas I. Stewart, Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind
Ms Elizabeth Storrs, ACT Schools Authority
Geoffrey Swan, Queensland Department of Education
Ross Swindley, National Library of Australia
W.D. Thorn, National Library of Australia
Ms Maira Turaids, University of Queensland
E. von Moller, ASE Pty Ltd, Melbourne
Mrs Taisoo Kim Watson, Central Gippsland Regional Library Service, Vic.
Ms Valerie Weldrick, State Library of NSW
Don Westaway, National Guide Dog & Mobility Centre, Melbourne
Ms Dianne White, Australian National Council of and for the Blind
Miss Maureen White, Australian Red Cross Society
Ms Patricia Willard, University of NSW School of Librarianship
Mrs Jenny Woodroffe, Sir James Mitchell School for Handicapped Children, WA

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

It is intended to divide those attending the Seminar into discussion groups of between 12 and 15 persons. Each discussion group will be allocated two topics for discussion and report. If time is insufficient for a full discussion on both topics groups are asked to concentrate on the first topic allocated. If there is sufficient time after discussing both topics allocated to it a group may consider any other topic of its choosing.

The topics for the discussion groups are:

A Segregation or integration of library services for the handicapped

B The role of voluntary organisations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped

C Promotion of existing (and future) library services and resources available to the handicapped

D Training for library staff who serve handicapped people

E Rationalisation of resources (and services?) - Needs and solutions

F Role of library services for the handicapped

G Design of library buildings and facilities for the handicapped (including consideration of special aids)

H Delivery of library service to the handicapped

The following brief notes are intended to guide discussion and point up some of the issues. The notes are not intended to limit or inhibit but to encourage discussion. Where it occurs, the term 'print-handicapped' should be taken to refer to a reader who is significantly restricted in his/her ability or capacity to use conventional print material because of a visual handicap or because of a physical handicap which prevents him/her from holding or controlling a book.

TOPIC A

Segregation or Integration of library services for the handicapped

Library services for the handicapped - whose responsibility?

How best can they be achieved?

Should library services for the (print) handicapped be integrated with the public library services or should they be separated into special services or institutions?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of segregated services as compared with services which are integrated with other library services, e.g. the public libraries?

Should there be a mixed system? If so, can a mix be suggested?

What do handicapped people themselves want?

What is best for a handicapped person in a large city? In a small country town?

What is best for the relatively mildly handicapped? for the severely handicapped?

It is likely that there will be a variety of answers.

Can the group explore this question in some depth.

TOPIC B

The role of voluntary organizations and volunteers in providing library services for the handicapped

What is the role of voluntary (welfare) organizations in providing library services for the handicapped? (a) at present? and (b) in the future? How will this role change?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of providing library service for the handicapped through voluntary organizations?

Would better service be given through government or government funded agencies? If so, what agencies?

If welfare organizations do have a role in providing library service for the handicapped how best can they co-ordinate their activities with each other and with government (Commonwealth, State and Local) agencies to provide library service for the handicapped?

What role is there for the individual volunteer in providing library service to the handicapped through voluntary organizations or public libraries?

Can such volunteers be integrated with others providing social services, e.g. Meals-on-Wheels?

Should some library services for the handicapped be integrated with social welfare services? If so, how?

TOPIC C

Promotion of existing (and future) library services and resources available to the handicapped

This question is central to the improvement of library service to the handicapped - How do we make available services and resources known? The traditional librarian's answer to produce a printed leaflet or brochure may not be the most appropriate suggestion especially for the print handicapped.

Is a marketing approach to the problem appropriate? If so, how might it be done?

What has been tried? How successful have these approaches been? How can we do better?

Can the Group come up with a list of suggestions, with comments upon them.

It is most unlikely that there will be one or two simple solutions. It is also unlikely that there will be unlimited funds for promotional activities.

Some interesting ways of promoting library services for the handicapped are mentioned on pages 52 & 53 of the Report on the National Survey of Library Services for Handicapped People.

TOPIC D

Training for library staff who serve handicapped people

What qualities and attributes are needed by library staff who serve handicapped people?

Can these be improved by training?

What is the present situation with regard to training in Australia? - A copy of the Survey of Tertiary Institutions Offering Courses in Librarianship (Seminar Document 3)*, prepared for the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped, will be provided as background.

Is the present situation satisfactory?

*Reproduced here as Appendix III

How can library staff be sensitised to the needs of a wide range of handicapped people including mentally and socially handicapped?

Who needs training?

Should all library staff receive it?

What sort of training is required?

How should training be given? In-service? Library School? TAFE College? Other?

Can the Group make suggestions for the type of course(s) it thinks appropriate, with some mention of content and length.

TOPIC E

Rationalization of Resources (and services?) - Needs and Solutions

What are we proposing to rationalize?

Are resources and services so poor at present that there is little to rationalize?

Is there a need for a Union Catalogue? If so, of what?

Is there a need for co-operation in copying/transcribing into braille or on the audio cassettes? If so, how can this be achieved?

What standards are needed?

Do suitable standards exist?

Can standards be achieved? If so, how?

What are the implications of computer production of braille in Australia?

What problems are posed by the law of Copyright? How can these be overcome?

Is there a need for a central clearing house for permission to copy?

TOPIC F

Role of library services for the handicapped

What is the role of the library serving the handicapped?

Is it to provide recreation, culture, information, education, inspiration?

What library services should be provided in order to achieve an effective coverage? How best can this be achieved? In what order of priority?

How do library services for the handicapped co-operate with/ integrate with other information services for them?

Given little or no increase in present budgets or levels of funding, how can existing services be improved?

TOPIC G

Design of library buildings and facilities for the handicapped (including consideration of special aids)

Last year the Standards Association of Australia issued Australian Standard 1428-1977: Design Rules for Access by the Disabled.

What are the implications of this standard for existing and future library buildings?

Is the standard satisfactory from the point of view of a library serving disabled (and handicapped) people?

What requirements do libraries serving handicapped people have for special furniture and fittings? for provision of special aids?

How can we obtain suitable library buildings in the future?

The Group is asked to look at these problems from the point of view of those with handicaps of different kinds and severity and not to equate handicapped or disabled with people confined to wheelchairs.

Can the Group come up with a checklist of requirements?

TOPIC H

Delivery of library service to the handicapped

How can library service be given to the handicapped?

What media are available? How can they be used?

What special services are required:

- trained staff?
- special equipment?
- special services for readers in person?
- service at a distance - through
  - bookmobiles?
  - post?
  - family?
- couriers - library staff?
  - volunteers?
  - others?

Centralized services?

Decentralized services?

This document is the amended text of a paper which has been considered by the Working Party on Library Services for the Handicapped. It was prepared by Shelagh Champion, Librarian, ACROD, who is a member of the Working Party.

SURVEY OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS OFFERING COURSES IN LIBRARIANSHIP

In March and April 1978 the Heads of Departments of Librarianship in eighteen tertiary institutions were contacted, to ascertain whether the special needs of handicapped people, and the librarian's response to those needs, were being covered in the curricula of the various courses. A follow-up letter was sent on May 24th 1978.

This report is based on letters received in reply to the stereotyped enquiry. The courses have been grouped into general librarianship and school and teacher librarianship courses. Within these groups, an attempt has been made to rank the courses from those appearing to offer the most in the subject area to those appearing to offer the least. The qualifications have been obtained from the Directory of Tertiary Courses, 1978.

General Librarianship

Base Courses (Undergraduate level)

1. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

Diploma of Librarianship: 3 years.
Bachelor of Social Science (Librarianship): 4 years.

All students take a core unit, Library Resources, which includes three lectures and three tutorials on library resources for the disadvantaged. One lecture covers persons disadvantaged for medical reasons (blind, deaf, paraplegics, physically handicapped, mentally retarded, mentally ill, short- and long-term hospital patients, drug addicts and institutionised old people). Another lecture covers among other groups the housebound aged and invalids.

A core unit, Library Systems and Administration, takes accessibility into account in dealing with the planning of library buildings.

The degree course offers in addition elective units in Library Work with Children, in which consideration is given to the needs of handicapped children, and Problems in Reading, which emphasises the causes of reading problems and the librarian's role in helping poor readers. Reference is made to the reading problems of the deaf and partially blind, and to bibliotherapy.

2. Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education

Bachelor of Library Science: 3 years.

All students take a core unit, Information Users, which includes a one-hour lecture, one film and two hours of small group discussion on the "handicapped".

In Information Resources brief mention is made of suitable resources.

An elective unit, Reluctant and Retarded Readers' Resources, is proposed.

3. Canberra College of Advanced Education

Bachelor of Arts: 3 years.

All students take a core unit, Library in Society, in which they are exposed to basic concepts of library service to handicapped people. Some attention, not systematic, is given to services for the blind and deaf. There is opportunity for elective study, resources being strong in intellectual disadvantage.

There is need to develop strength in design and planning.

4. Ballarat College of Advanced Education

Diploma of Librarianship: 3 years.

All students take a core unit, The Library and its Resources, which touches on the problems of visually and physically handicapped users. The Library and the Community and Reader Services and Community Needs include aspects of service to the handicapped.

A film is shown, and visits are made to libraries offering special services.

5. South Australian Institute of Technology

Bachelor of Arts: 3 years.

All students take a core unit in which special materials are mentioned.

There is opportunity for elective study and special projects.

6. Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College

Associate Diploma in Library Media: 2 years.

See notes under School and Teacher Librarianship for this College. No differentiation is stated between course material for general and school librarians.

7. Riverina College of Advanced Education

Diploma of Arts (Library and Information Science): 3 years.

No reply.

8. Western Australian Institute of Technology

Major in Bachelor of Applied Science: 3 years.

No reply.

Graduate Diploma Courses; other Post-Graduate Courses

Universities

1. University of New South Wales

G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year; Master of Librarianship: 1 year.

Library services for the handicapped, and the problems of special groups such as the handicapped are described and discussed in Libraries and Information, Public Libraries, and School Libraries.

2. Monash University

Master of Librarianship.

The problems of the handicapped are considered whenever it is appropriate, for example in Information Needs and Services.

Colleges of Advanced Education

1. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year.

In a core unit, Information Resources, library services to the handicapped are treated as an apsect of trends in public and general library services. There is opportunity for elective study.

The performance characteristics of buildings as they relate to the handicapped are also treated.

Elective units are offered in Library Services to Children and Reading Needs. These units are taught in common with the elective units offered to degree students, and the same remarks apply.

2. Tasmanian College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year.

No differentiation is stated between course material for general and school librarians.

A core unit, Users, has a section on services to the disadvantaged which includes a segment on the handicapped: who they are; what services they seem to be getting; more adequate responses (building access, materials selection, services). There is opportunity for elective study.

A core unit, Education: an Overview, has a section on individual differences with emphasis on the handicapped child in the normal or special school situation, and the responses the school librarian can make.

Resources for young people has an elective on services to the handicapped child. There is field-work in a special school.

There is opportunity for students to submit a diploma assignment.

An invitational workshop on Library Services to the Handicapped in Tasmania is planned for early 1979.

3. Queensland Institute of Technology

G. Diploma of Library Science: 1 year.

In Collections Development special attention is given to resources appropriate for use by those with impaired vision, impaired co-ordination, dyslexia and functional illiteracy.

The design of library buildings, bearing the needs of the physically handicapped in mind, and the provision of special services for the housebound and institutionalised elderly, are covered in other units.

There is wide opportunity for elective study in the unit Libraries and Librarianship.

4. Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma of Library Science: 1 year.

Graduate Diploma students would cover the same ground as degree students, but only spend half the time.

5. Canberra College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year.

Some attempt is made to introduce students to basic concepts of social aspects of librarianship in Collections Development and Use.

There is opportunity for elective study throughout the course.

6. South Australian Institute of Technology

G. Diploma of Library Studies: 1 year.

The handicapped are mentioned as being one of the particular groups for whom library services must be organised on a special basis.

There is opportunity for elective study and special projects.

7. Melbourne State College

G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year.

The College first entered the field of training "generalist" librarians in 1978. It is expected that graduates will find employment as teacher librarians, librarians in schools and colleges and children's librarians in public libraries. An elective unit, The Library and Special Groups, will probably be offered in 1979.

The subject defines, describes and examines the educationally significant characteristics of children in the following groups: extremely able; mentally retarded, educable/trainable; socially disadvantaged; emotionally disturbed; physically handicapped, orthopedic handicaps/sensory handicaps (vision and hearing); learning disabled, language/perceptual/motor; and culturally disadvantaged, minority groups/migrants. The requirements for resources for these groups of children and their teachers are examined, and consideration is given to resource services and organisation. The subject is to be taught by a one-hour lecture/discussion and a two-hour workshop each week, and assessment is by two 1000 word assignments and one 3000 word assignment.

School and Teacher Librarianship

1. Tasmanian College of Advanced Education

Bachelor of Education (Librarianship): **4th year option;**
G. Diploma in Librarianship: 1 year.
A core unit, Users, has a section on services to the disadvantaged which includes a segment on the handicapped: who they are; what services they seem to be getting; more adequate responses (building access, materials selection, services). There is opportunity for elective study.

A core unit, Education: an Overview, has a section on individual differences with emphasis on the handicapped child in the normal or special school situation, and the responses the school librarian can make.

Resources for Young People has an elective on services to the handicapped child. There is field-work in a special school.

There is opportunity for students to submit a diploma assignment.

An invitational workshop on Library Services to the Handicapped in Tasmania is planned for early 1979.

2. Western Australian Secondary Teachers' College

Associate Diploma in Library Media: 2 years;

Specialisation in Dip. Teach. (Sec.) after 1 year of successful teaching following Dip. Teach.

In School Library Administration mention is made in a lecture on physical plant, and reference is made to recent United States legislation concerning the integration of handicapped students into public schools.

School Libraries and the Educational Process includes library services to special groups, while School Librarianship has slight reference.

Problems with selection of materials is treated in Educational Resources.

Bibliotherapy for physically and psychologically handicapped people and children is treated in Reference Services.

3. Canberra College of Advanced Education

Specialised program in Bachelor of Education: 4 years.

Students undertake a Bachelor of Education program with a major in librarianship. All these students take the Library in Society unit, noted previously for the Bachelor of Arts Course. They must also take units in education which have a bearing on the subject.

There is wide opportunity for elective study.

4. Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education

Dip. Teacher Librarianship: 1 year;
G. Dip. Teacher Librarianship: 1 year.

Students would cover the same ground as the Bachelor of Library Science students, but only spend half the time.

5. Ballarat College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma of Teacher Librarianship: 1 year.

Library Resources and Suppliers touches on the problems of visually and physically handicapped users.

A film is shown, and visits are made to libraries offering special services.

6. Adelaide College of Advanced Education

Specialisation in Dip.Teach.(Sec.): 3 years; in Adv.Dip.Teach.(Sec.): 4 years; in B.Ed: 4 years; awaiting accreditation; in G.Dip.Teach.(Sec.): 1 year.

Library services to the disadvantaged are discussed, and there is opportunity for elective study and projects.

7. Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma of Teacher-Librarianship, 1 semester full time and 2 semesters part time, available to experienced teachers with appropriate qualifications.

There is opportunity for elective study only. Students may take a unit, *Modern Developments in Special Education*.

A unit is proposed on learning resources for exceptional children.

8. Townsville College of Advanced Education

G. Diploma in Teacher Librarianship: 1 year.

"The usual amount of attention" is given to large print collections, special lighting, ramps, and toy libraries.

9. Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education

Specialisation in Bachelor of Education: 4 years;
Associate Diploma of School Librarianship: 14 week external course (information from letter.)
4 years part-time, external, to trained teachers with 2 - 3 years experience (information from Directory.)

In *Organisation and Administration of the Library Resource Centre* a building assignment is undertaken, during which students would find reference to the needs of handicapped persons in library literature.

10. Melbourne State College

Specialisation in Bachelor of Education: 4 years;
G. Diploma of Librarianship: 1 year

See notes under Graduate Diploma courses in general librarianship for an elective unit, *The Library and Special Groups*, proposed for 1979.

COPYRIGHT IMPLICATIONS OF LIBRARY SERVICES FOR HANDICAPPED PEOPLE

This paper has been written by David Catterns, Legal Officer of the Australian Copyright Council, as a background paper for the Seminar.

INTRODUCTION

Under the present copyright law, the Copyright Act, 1968, there are no specific provisions relating to use of copyright material by or on behalf of blind or handicapped people. The fair dealing provisions and the educational and library use provisions apply equally to all users.

In general, the owner of copyright in a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work has the exclusive right "to reproduce the work in a material form" (section 31). This extends to the reproduction of "a substantial part" of the work (section 14). Reproduction in the form of braille or a similar system would no doubt constitute a reproduction in a material form. In addition, the making of a sound recording of a work and of a record embodying the recording is "deemed to be a reproduction of the work" (section 21).

The right to reproduce [a substantial part of] a work in a material form is one of the "acts comprised in the copyright" (section 13).

The principal infringement section of the Copyright Act is section 36 (1):

> Subject to this Act, the copyright in a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work is infringed by a person who, not being the owner of the copyright, and without the licence of the owner of the copyright, does in Australia, or authorizes the doing in Australia of, any act comprised in the copyright.

Accordingly, it is an infringement to reproduce a substantial part of a work without the owner's licence or to authorize such reproduction.

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EXCEPTIONS

Section 40 of the Act provides:

> A fair dealing with a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work, or with an adaptation of a literary, dramatic or musical work, for the purpose of research or private study does not constitute an infringement of the copyright in the work.

The extent to which those who provide services to the blind and to handicapped readers can rely on this section is unclear. At present, there is no quantitative definition of what is a fair dealing. It is possible that the reproduction of a whole work in, say, braille or a talking book would constitute a fair dealing but I think that this would only be in exceptional cases. Any systematic reproduction of whole works would not constitute a fair dealing. In addition, the limitation as to purpose - research or private study - would obviously not cover reproductions for recreational or general informational purposes.

Section 49 permits librarians to make "a copy" of one or more periodical articles or of a reasonable portion of a work, on behalf of a person who requires the copy for the purpose of research or private study. In my opinion, "a copy" probably extends to braille and talking books but the limitations as to purpose remain and "a reasonable portion" would rarely, if ever, extend to the whole work.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The Copyright Law Committee on Reprographic Reproduction (the Franki Committee) tabled its report in December 1976. On 25 June 1978, the Attorney-General announced that amendments to the Copyright Act would be introduced into Parliament in the Budget Sittings. The proposals "follow the recommendations" of the Franki Committee. The Attorney-General made a specific reference to handicapped readers:

> Handicapped Readers
>
> Senator Durack said the new arrangements would allow handicapped readers to have quicker access to published material. The proposals would enable educational establishments for the visually handicapped to reproduce material by means such as braille and by sound recordings.

> Difficulties had arisen in the past because of the length of time taken to obtain permission to reproduce material for visually handicapped people.
>
> While permission was almost never refused, the delay in obtaining it caused visually handicapped students to be at a disadvantage.
>
> The licensing arrangements for the visually handicapped would operate in the same way as the scheme for photocopying.

Until we see the amendments, it is not clear to what extent they will free librarians and others from copyright worries when they provide services for the blind and handicapped readers. Here are some guesses and some questions:

1. The Franki Committee's terms of reference refer to "reprographic reproduction", which "includes any system or technique by which facsimile reproductions are made in any size or form". In my opinion, neither braille nor talking books come within this definition of reprographic reproduction.

2. The Attorney-General's press release refers to "educational establishments for the visually handicapped". Will the amendments extend to municipal libraries? Will they cover non-educational uses, such as recreational?

3. If the licensing arrangements are to operate in the same way as the scheme for photocopying, this means that the service institutions will have to record such reproductions and pay a negotiated fee.

4. How are handicapped readers to be defined?

5. The relevant Franki Committee's recommendations include,

   . the broadening of the fair dealing "purpose" to either "research or study" (dropping "private") or "purposes such as research, study, private or personal use".

   . the addition of a list of "factors to be considered" in determining whether a dealing is a "fair dealing":

      (i) The purpose and character of the dealing;
      (ii) The nature of the work;

(iii) The amount and substantiality of the portion taken in relation to the whole work;

(iv) Whether the work can be obtained within a reasonable time at a normal commercial price;

(v) The effect of the dealing upon the potential market for or value of the work.

(Report, p.139)

a quantification of fair dealing:

(b) Without restricting the meaning of the expression 'fair dealing' the making of one copy for (*research or study),

(i) in the case of copying from a periodical publication, of not more than a single article or, where more than one article relates to the same subject matter, those articles; or

(ii) in the case of copying from an edition of a work, of not more than one chapter or 10 per cent of the number of pages in that edition, whichever is the greater,

is a fair dealing with the work.

* the words in brackets should correspond with the words used in section 40.

(Report, p.139)

a similar quantification of "reasonable portion";

(3) A provision be added to the Act permitting the copying in a library of an entire work or more than a reasonable portion of it where that work forms part of a collection in the library if the librarian has first determined on the basis of a reasonable investigation that an unused copy of the work cannot be obtained within a reasonable time at a normal commercial price and makes a declaration to this effect, and provided a declaration is also made by the user of the library that the copy is required for a purpose specified in section 49(3) as proposed to be amended and provided the declarations are open for inspection upon reasonable notice and are retained by the library for a period of 12 months.

(Report, p.140)

OFF-AIR RECORDING

Section 111 of the Act provides

> (1) The copyright in a television broadcast in so far as it consists of visual images is not infringed by the making of a cinematograph film of the broadcast, or a copy of such a film, for the private and domestic use of the person by whom it is made.
>
> (2) The copyright in a sound broadcast, or in a television broadcast in so far as it consists of sounds, is not infringed by the making of a sound recording of the broadcast, or a record embodying such a recording, for the private and domestic use of the person by whom it is made.
>
> (3) For the purposes of this section, a cinematograph film or a copy of such a film, or a sound recording or a record embodying such a recording, shall be deemed to be made otherwise than for the private and domestic use of the person by whom it is made if it is made for the purpose of -
>
> (a) the sale or letting for hire of a copy of the film or of a record embodying the recording, as the case may be;
>
> (b) broadcasting the film or recording; or
>
> (c) causing the film or recording to be seen or heard in public.

I do not know whether library services for handicapped people include audio or videotaping off air. If they do, they almost certainly constitute infringements of copyright. Even if section 111 covers recording by a librarian for a library user's private and domestic use, the exception only extends to the copyright in the broadcast itself: such recording will constitute an infringement of the copyright in any works, sound recordings or films which are part of the broadcast. In addition, there is no provision in the Act for fair dealing with respect to sound recordings or films.

CONCLUSION

It appears that those who provide library services for handicapped people will have less copyright problems in the future. As the Attorney-General says, copyright owners "almost never" refuse permission for these uses but the Government has chosen the approach of statutory licensing. In my opinion, the need for such a drastic reduction in authors' rights had not been established. There may be a few cases, such as students, where a blanket licensing approach such as the Franki Committee's, was appropriate. In most of the library services for handicapped readers, however, the element of urgency is not present and simplified voluntary licensing procedures are certainly feasible - in fact, authors and publishers were working with some of the service institutions to develop these.

A statutory licence does not provide unalloyed benefits for users: as I read the Attorney-General's statement, one of the features of the statutory licence for handicapped people will be that the uses for which owners now grant permission free of charge will be subject to recording and to payment.

DAVID CATTERNS
25 July 1978

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APPENDIX V

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

PRINT HANDICAPPED CITIZEN

This submission has been prepared by the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF BLIND CITIZENS LIBRARY COMMITTEE

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PREFACE

Throughout this Submission, the term "blind" will be used to describe those blind and partially sighted people who are eligible to receive a Blind Pension.

In essence, this Document supports a national concept of library services, expressed through various physical arms of service, conveniently located in chosen States. The two main streams of service will be:

1. Book translation and production centres, arising from specialised interest and experience of welfare agencies for the blind.

2. A divisional multi-media library which is attached to and a part of, the citizen's library system in each State.

....

Although this Submission has been prepared by the N.F.B.C. the ideas expressed are a culmination of years of experience of contributing members in many Organisations of the Blind, and the thoughts expressed on many occasions by blind people in community. Therefore, this Document can be seen to represent the views of blind people generally, with the exception of minor interpretations of general policies.

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SECTION I

THE PHILOSOPHICAL, POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL BASIS FOR THE SUBMISSION.

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR ALL - LIMITED OR UNLIMITED - FOR WHOM?

OR ALTERNATIVELY TITLED

LIBRARY SERVICE A RIGHT FOR ALL OR A PRIVILEGE FOR SOME?

All men are created free and equal, with inalienable rights. This affirmation is accepted today without question by civilised socities, including our own. It does not suggest or imply that all men have equal potential; that would be quite untenable. But it does affirm that all men are of equal worth and must have equal access to the rights which their society determines are the right of all persons.

These rights cannot and must not be granted with discrimination or withheld. They are the birthright of everyone, as inseparable as the breathe and the blood of his body. The United Nations Charter of Human Rights makes this quite clear.

Furthermore, the Charter of Rights of the "disabled" reaffirms this but goes further, pointing out that in order to guarantee those rights to all, in the case of some handicapped persons, supplementary provisions must be made to insure that these people are not discriminated against or deprived of those rights.

The right to read is one of these for information, stimulation, recreation and enlightenment. Any curtailment of access to an accepted wide range of material in these areas is a deprivation and a curtailment of development of the citizen who seeks the opportunity for such development and stimulation. The person who has access to the full range of proliferating print can choose to ignore it or to use it for his benefit. The"print deprived"have no such choice.

In Australia, and the other Western countries, adequate or reasonable library service is provided for the citizen, if he is restricted by geography and, in the case of certain handicaps, an attempt to meet his needs is made through postal or mobile services. It is encouraging to find that more libraries are becoming more accessible to more people, by the construction of ramps rather than steps in new library buildings and by visits to some housebound people in their homes by library personnel.

Governments in Australia now accept responsibility for funding local library service as one of the unquestioned and rightful freedoms of John Citizen.

What of Blind citizens? The Australian community does not as yet, accept responsibility, or make anything like similar or adequate provisions for this group of citizens. Over many years organisations of blind people have drawn attention to this discriminating, unjust and anomalous situation. Their plea for equality and adequate library service is by no means a newfound sentiment.

In October 1961 the then Australian Federation of Organisations of the Blind, at the Biennial Conference in Brisbane, unanimously passed the following resolution: that, "The AFOB take whatever steps are necessary to improve library services for the blind in Australia, including requests for increased financial support from Governments." (Conference Report page 97 Resolution 12, 1961).

At the first ever meeting of the blind people of the world, assembled at Colombo in October, 1969, for the first convention of the International Federation of the Blind, "A charter for the blind of the World" was adopted by the Convention. Article six reads "Governments should accept responsibility and make adequate provision for the basic needs for all blind citizens at least equal to those provided for sighted citizens and, where necessary, make supplementary provisions to aim to give parity with sighted citizens in pre-school services, education, vocational training, employment, rehabilitation, library services and textbooks, whether braille, large print or tape, problems of the aged and general welfare.

In June 1977, at its convention in Sydney, the National Federation of Blind Citizens passed resolutions as follows; resolution 77.20 "That reading facilities for the blind should be afforded the same financial support by Government, as that given to the libraries for the sighted. Furthermore we assert that libraries for the blind should be considered an integral part of the national and state services in every respect."

Resolution 77.18, "This convention requests the Executive to take steps to call a conference in Australia to discuss standards, production and distribution of written and spoken media."

In 1977 in Melbourne, in a consultation with the blind and visually handicapped, instigated by the Social Security Department and NASE, both the administrators and the users group commented on the short comings and the need for more adequate library services for this group of citizens.

Administrators group recommendation 2: "The group considered that there was a need for a comprehensive and well co-ordinated library system for blind and visually impaired people. It recommended the development of a national production service for braille, large print and recorded materials.

The users report, under COMMUNICATION, makes the following comment: "We assert that there continues to be a pressing need for the establishment of the Government sponsored national printing house for the blind and partially sighted people .... we feel ...... that cassette and talking book services ought to be made available to the population at large; ...... such a printing house which would of course mass produce material in braille and large print, would help to fulfill the urgent need for mass communication with, and among, blind people in this society; which is becoming increasingly reliant on visual media for the disemination of information .... we feel that such an establishment should function where possible, in conjunction with regional and municipal libraries, and that since such services are recognised in general as a community right, THESE SHOULD NOT BE DENIED PEOPLE WHOSE REQUIRED MEDIA IS OTHER THAN PRINT. Governments therefore have a responsibility to adequately expand and support such services for blind and visually handicapped people using English and other languages.

"In the meantime however, since our library services ought to be regarded as a right and not a privilege to be bestowed by charitable activities, we request Governments to engage much more extensively in the sponsorship of current private services, thus inducing a closer co-ordination and higher standard of such services."

In September 1977, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) endorsed the statement by Mr. Frank Kurt Sylke, Chief Division for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, Library of Congress U.S.A. which in part, stated that:

"Library service for the handicapped has the same philosophical base as that for the non-handicapped. Many of the service and technical approaches are identical; although providing appropriate library material for blind and other handicapped people has necessitated the utilization of mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering disciplines, the medium selected must be related to service and library philosophy."

Blind people, like other citizens, are a broad and varied group. Some are ratepayers, some are not; some taxpayers, some not, yet, these incidental facts neither ensure nor should they deny rights that are guaranteed by citizenship itself. Yet, in Australia, library service for blind people has been dependant on charity, not on Right, on well-meaning but not often well qualified welfare personnel, rather than on qualified librarians; on having to take it's turn on economic grounds as a secondary service appendage in welfare agency programmes, rather than being guaranteed by Government support and provision as in the case of print libraries. Welfare Libraries have tended to cater for the popular majority of light readers and largely ignored and left serious gaps in the reading, current and cultural needs of the avid, eager, erst-while lifelong readers who enjoyed the vast range of printed matter prior to losing their sight. Therefore, it is essential that library services for blind and other handicapped people must be an integral part of community library programme. It is also essential that consultation with appropriate consumers is seen not only as a right, but as a necessity if the service is to meet the real needs of the citizens it aims to serve. It is therefore, very regretable that the Australian Working Party inquiring into library services for the handicapped, is deficient in that it has no direct consumer representation. This should be rectified immediately. Later, this document will clearly show how necessary is an accountability committee of consumers for the development and maintenance of a satisfactory service.

The right of blind and all print handicapped people to reasonable library service in Australia is surely accepted; the need is established; the desire for it apparent; and the means and technology available as indicated by resolution 78.1 of the National Federation of Blind Citizens Convention in Sydney in June 1978. "That with the advent of mass production of braille and of high speed copying facilities in Australia, N.F.B.C. requests publication of radio programme guides in braille, large print and cassette format for regular distribution to blind people."

The only question now awaiting an answer is HAS THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY THE WILL TO MAKE ADEQUATE, EQUITABLE LIBRARY SERVICE FOR ALL BLIND AND PRINT HANDICAPPED PEOPLE A REALITY?

SECTION 2

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS OF LIBRARY SERVICES

GENERAL

1. Range of Readership According to Visual Accuity

Visually impaired people fall into the following categories:
those who use special magnification to read print:
those who use large print:
Braille and recordings.

The first category is included because these readers will require other modes of reading on occasions for ease and fluency, e.g. because of the length of material and/or because of adverse reading conditions. Many of the remaining readers will also use several modes of reading according to the nature of the material and the reading conditions. We therefore stress the complementary nature of reading methods employed by blind people.

2. Forms of Reading

Libraries for the blind should contain reading material in the three forms they use: Braille, sound and large print.

3. Finance

The transcription of print into the other forms is a primary need for the blind, and therefore should have high priority, separate funding.

Funding for the literary needs of the blind should be in excess of the figures quoted for libraries for the sighted for the following reasons:-

(a) Library services have to make up for the loss of access to information available to those who can see, e.g., newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc.

(b) Books and more ephemeral material has to be reproduced in a suitable form for blind people to read independently.

4. Book Ownership

Book production must provide for private ownership. (Reference: Appendix Policy 78.25 Page 41 A submission prepared by N.F.B.C. Library Committee in New South Wales concerned with a pilot scheme for book ownership).

5. **Production/Distribution**

Literacy needs fall into two distinct categories:

(a) Transcription from print (in ordinary terms this means printing and publishing).

(b) Ordinary library facilities; only differing in book form and methods of distribution, although the latter may be seen as an arm of the "housebound service".

6. **Staffing**

Suitable blind people should be employed in both production and distribution facilities. There are a number of blind people whose training, knowledge and experience would ensure a valuable contribution.

Lending libraries for the blind should be staffed by regular, trained librarians so that:

(a) staff are not divorced from the general mainstream in either attitude or facility.

(b) staff should be accessible to the blind subscriber so that this reader may be introduced and maintain an association with what is being read in the community by his sighted contemporaries.

7. **Distribution and Circulation**

Libraries for the blind should have a national rationale, but should comprise State facilities to keep close personal contact between borrower and library personnel, remembering that readers will generally require phone and mail services. Provision should be made for borrowers to order in Braille and tape, ordering from lists if they wish. Readers should be able to order books from their local community library, (although Braille and copyright sound recordings for the sole use of the blind may not be stocked); from the specialist multi-media for the blind in each State, through a visiting welfare officer - this latter practice should be temporary as the aim should be to familiarise borrowers with existing services, and make them independent library users.

8. **Lending**

A national composite catalogue would increase the number of books available to readers. This crucial innovation would prevent unnecessary duplication of titles. Lending procedures should cater for interstate and interlibrary lending. This is necessary to make full use of limited resources.

9. Special Functions of the Library

Special Distribution Responsibilities

(a) To distribute material which organisations of the blind persons, wish to circulate amongst the blind community.

(b) To circulate readers with information about the library, to organise programmes to stimulate readership, to introduce readers to new and current material, and to generally compensate for the fact that blind people often do not have access to information about books in print.

(c) Please note that a most suitable outlet would be Library of the Air and other radio resource outlets. (Reference: Library of the Air, Page 30).

(d) To archive and distribute Library of the Air programmes and significant radio talk programmes.

(e) To make available, information produced by welfare departments of agencies for the blind, e.g. information regarding pensions, resource material such as public transport timetables, Some of this information will already be available in sound magazines produced by organisations of and for the blind.

(f) Multi-media libraries could be responsible for circulating reading machines to other libraries, e.g. close circuit television magnifying machines such as the Visual Tech. which is too expensive for many people to own for private, personal use.

10. Library Stock

The visually handicapped are a widely diverse group, differing in education, experience and interests. The normal acquisition procedures followed in libraries for the sighted, are therefore applicable. It is suggested that further acquisition of literature should be based on a detailed appraisal of titles already in existence. This would require a prior making of a national composite catalogue, so that new material would move towards parity with a large cosmopolitan library for the sighted. Categories most poorly represented include:

(a) material of an ephemeral nature, e.g. pamphlets, handbooks, brochures such as Adult Education classes, radio and television guides, (Reference: Policy No. 78.1). Page 41

(b) recreational reading, e.g. European, Asian, American, modern classics, contemporary Australian literature and international bestsellers.

(c) Children's recreational reading, including books for the pre-school child. (Reference: Appendix Submission by N.F.B.C. Library Committee in Victoria for Audio Pilot Scheme Sponsored by the State Library of Victoria, Page 38). (Reference: Individual Responses to Surveys by Barbara Blackman and Gail Thornton, Pages 34, 35, 36) We applaud the increase in sound magazine material (Reference: Policy No. 78.5 Page 41).

(d) Increased numbers of aged persons with poor vision, indicates a greater need for large print material. The existing range is limited almost exclusively, to recreational reading. The needs of younger partially sighted persons should not be ignored, e.g. no modern comprehensive recipe book in large print exists.

11. Standards

(a) Standards of book production and reading should be assessed by those who have both technical knowledge and literary expertise. Readers' assessments are absolutely necessary.

(b) The national reservoir of existing reading material should be assessed in the following way:

Material which is of a suitably high standard;
Material which is of a questionable standard which should remain in circulation until replaced;
Material which is of such poor quality that it should be immediately withdrawn from circulation and gradually replaced.
(Reference: Policy Nos. 77.20, 21, 22 Page 40)
Nos. 77.11, 77.12 Page 39)

(c) Future Standards should be formalised nationally.

AUDIO

(a) General

Although some types of literature such as highly dramatic and complex material, require professional reading, the availability of untrained readers at home cannot be ignored. These readers would benefit from a short training course and from experience reading ephemeral information. Highly technical reading skill does not replace a reading infused with warmth and a genuine love for what is being presented.

The use and maintenance of top class recording and copying equipment is the most important issue.
(References: "Thoughts Towards ......" by Barbara Blackman and "A Discussion Paper ...... " by Lloyd Junor, Pages 15 and 22.

Material of a reference nature, recorded in sound, would be much easier to use if search and retrieval methods as prescribed by Professor Emmerson Foulke were in common use. Books such as dictionaries, handbooks and recipe books, would be much more feasible in sound and an invaluable asset for Braille handicapped persons such as the aged and diabetics.

(b) Braille Transcription

Braille transcribers and proof readers should be certificated to a uniform, national standard based on the courses and standards achieved by the Royal National Institute for the Blind and the Library of Congress, U.S.A.

For newly blinded persons, Braille is a complex and difficult medium, invaluable nevertheless because of its uniqueness as both a reading and writing method. Poor quality Braille depreciates the standard of literature, is very difficult to read fluently, and it misrepresents the real value of Braille: it discourages new readers and is a source of severe irritation to those who are experienced.

Knowledge of Braille does not in itself, indicate expert transcription and proof reading ability; people already working in the field (both blind and sighted), should undergo a formal certification programme, although in many cases this procedure will only be a formal recognition of standards already achieved.
(Reference: Detailed Section on Braille, Page 9).

(c) Large Print

The difficulties of maintaining standards in large print are not as taxing as those for Braille or sound. Nevertheless, uniform standards are difficult to formulate as partial vision is a highly individualistic and complex condition; it is therefore advisable to draw on the experience of established large print producers, including newspaper printers.
(Reference: # see below for this section.)

(d) Libraries in Schools

Although we feel that parents, teachers and students are better suited to submit criteria for standards in school libraries, we do suggest that the standards outlined here do apply to them also. We also draw your attention to the fact that they should comply with the standardsset down for secondary schools for the sighted.
(Reference: "Standard for Secondary School Libraries")

# Policy 77.11 Fortunately the practice of enlarging ordinary prints is disappearing, and is being replaced by a bolder, larger print, specially devised for those who are visually handicapped. As this group is growing in number, as our age population grows, we draw your attention to policy 77.12 Page 40.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that this Section is prescriptive rather than critical. We so not deny the dedicated and tireless service which many individual workers for the blind have given. It is our intention to stimulate and formulate so that excellent, not just good enough, library services are available for blind people all over Australia. We also draw your attention to policies commending new trends as expressed in Policies Nos. 78 - 4, 5, 6.

DETAILED REQUIREMENTS

(a) Braille The Case for Braille - Introduction

The development of the cassette recorder coupled with the improvements in the design and operation of the talking book machine; plus the wider use of large print has added dimension to the reading matter accessible to blind and visually handicapped persons in Australia.

Therefore, it may appear that the traditional system of braille is superseded by these developments and has fallen into disuse. It would be more correct to say, that the majority of blind and visually handicapped readers use at least two forms of reading while a number use the three forms, to explore the widest range of material. So in fact, the various systems compliment each other.

Braille is a simple and comprehensive method of reading and writing, which can be taught to children and adults. It is a skill which once acquired gives the blind person a new independence in communications. Figures may support the claim that a decreasing number of people in Australia are using braille. In assessing this situation it is necessary to take into account the neglect which braille has suffered due to the diversion of funds, by agencies for the blind, to other projects such as, talking books which through intensive publicity campaigns, have gained wide public appeal and support. Braille has not been exposed to such publicity its use in blind schools and rehabilitation centres neither encouraged or fully utilised. For many years braille production has relied heavily on small groups of voluntary transcribers laboriously brailleing by hand a few titles a year. The standard of braille has not been maintained by a proper certificated standard. The readers choice is limited to a few thousand titles available in each of the libraries throughout Australia. Until the introduction of computerised braille this year there was no multi copy production attempted.

Though the choice of books is sadly limited and the standard of braille deteriorating; braille readers have tolerated these frustrations with remarkable patience. Probably because there is a special enrichment in reading to ones self and this experience is as real to the blind person as it is to those who can see. Just as the printed word becomes a stream of living images in the mind of the sighted reader, so to, does the braille under the fingers of the blind reader become living words and images in his mind.

(a) Braille (Cont'd.) **Production**

In looking at production, factors to be considered are, mass production in the long term and short term e.g. long term material, the Classics, History, Poetry, Recreational and basic material required by students e.g. short term, Periodicals, Magazines, Newspapers. It is essential where books will remain in circulation for years, being read many times that high quality braille be produced. Some of the best braille produced overseas is from the Royal National Institute for the Blind in the United Kingdom. This braille is a product of the braille press, it is pleasing to touch and has an enduring quality, pages are interpointed on both sides. The computerised braille recently produced in Australia, is of quite an acceptable standard and will probably improve with better production techniques. It is interesting to note that overseas the computer and the braille press are used in conjunction. This method of production should be further investigated by Australia. The suggestion by the International Federation of Libraries Associations that all braille books be printed in simple braille is not practical. In comparison to print, braille is inevitably bulky and every effort should be made to make books compact thus fully contracted (grade two braille) should be the standard.

Attention should be given to production of compact volumes of 60 to 70 leaves (approx. 130 to 140 Pages), approximate dimensions of volumes 13" x 10½". Volumes need to be strongly bound preferably in clothboard covers. Paper to be used for braille books must be tough and light weight.

Storage: Braille books are best stored in movable shelves (compactors) this system makes the best possible use of space, each rack can be moved by a light touch of the hand, enabling easy access to shelves by library staff, or by the user who may want to browse through the books. Identification is made easy if all volumes bear a title label in grade two braille on the outside of the front cover. Properly stored firmly packed books kept upright will keep their shape and retain clear braille for many years.

The distribution of braille should be a function of the multi-media library, as outlined in the N.F.B.C. submission. From this centre books could be farmed out to local libraries on request. There also needs to be improvement in the response to telephone requests for books, this delay is often due to there only being one copy of each title in the library and the reader is required to take his place in the queue. Other delays in supplying books to readers may occur due to lack of staff or poor catalogueing. There is urgent need for updating of braille catalogues, as no library appears to have a detailed catalogue available.

(a) Braille (Cont'd.) **Transcription Services**

Braille transcribing should be retained as long as there are dedicated people willing to undertake it, because this service supplements the special needs of readers. Many willing people through their untiring efforts, have performed the most commendable work in transcribing books which have afforded much pleasure to braille readers. However, the standard of braille has not matched the dilligence of these volunteers. Transcribers would be keenly disappointed to learn that their braille was less than acceptable. This criticism is not of THEIR performance, it serves to point up the need for a certificated standard of writing which all transcribers would probably be glad to aspire to. The emphasis on a high standard of braille production, is a fair requirement as it is for printed books. Many books which still line the shelves in braille libraries would have been discarded long ago, as unsuitable in community libraries.

Expectations of the Braille Reader.

What should the braille reader expect from the library service?

1. A comprehensive selection of books to cater for his educational, cultural and recreational needs.

2. To be able to buy books of his choice from the library at a price no greater than the printed copy. This would mean to many the ownership of books, for the first time.

3. Immediate access to material such as service manuals, cookbooks, pamphlets on community health, child care and printed material from radio broadcasts. This kind of service cannot be considered privileged, it is simply establishing equality between the blind person and his sighted peer.

Funding

It is difficult to see how braille production ought to be funded, to say who should bear the ultimate responsibility for cost. However, funds should surely be available through a joint response from the Federal and State Governments with appropriate contributions from agencies for the blind.

(a) Braille (Cont'd.)

USING THE COMPUTER TO AID THE PRODUCTION OF BRAILLE

Though more and more literature will become accessible to the braille reader in alternate forms such as pre-recorded cassettes and voice output reading machines, there is no doubt that the requirement for all kinds of reading matter to be produced in braille will increase dramatically. There are a number of reasons why modern computer systems can contribute very significantly to the solution to the problem of producing large quantities of braille within a time span satisfactory to the reader.

1. The computer provides a fast and reliable method by which data entered into its system by operators with no knowledge of braille can be translated.
2. The computer's storage devices provide a space saving and efficient means of holding large quantities of pre or post translation text.
3. The brailling device connected to the computer is able to produce braille at a relatively high speed when compared with other low cost braille duplication devices.
4. If desired a braille printing press can be connected to the computer so that the computer translates and formats the text to be transferred to the plates.
5. The final product is more error free.
    a. The program will only make translation and formatting errors if it encounters a situation which has not been allowed for in the writing and modifying of the program.
    b. Errors resulting from inaccuracies at the input stage can much more easily be corrected by instructions to the editing program than by using traditional manual techniques.

The translation process requires a reasonable amount of computing power in terms of speed of processing and central storage but for a minimal amount of time. Editing (entering and correcting the data) is less demanding on the system in terms of processing time and central storage, but does take a longer amount of actual time. The process of printing the braille requires little central storage and processing time and a significant amount of actual time. Processing time is the time of using the centralprocessor of the computer and is much less than the total time to do the job.

There are two distinct approaches that may be taken in harnessing modern computer technology in order to aid the production of braille.

1. This technique is to employ a small or (mini) computer with the sole function of being used to aid the production of braille.
2. This technique involves sharing with other users a much larger set of computing resources. This involves having one's input terminals (VDU/keyboards) and output devices (e.g. braille printers) connected via Telecom Communication lines to a central computer.

(a) Braille (Cont'd.)

Method 2 has a number of advantages over Method 1.

A. COST

Method 1 involves the purchase of computing equipment which will not be used to anywhere near its maximum capacity for the large majority of the time. On the otherhand the maximum demand on it can be greater than its capacity. On the otherhand with Method 2 the user only pays for the computer resources required to do the job. Method 1 would also necessitate other costs such as for servicing and the employment of a computer manager. Method 2 would require some servicing costs but substantially less. The hire of communication lines would be comparable to the salary of the computer manager. Hence Method 2 requires much less finance for the same return.

B. RELIABILITY

A large computer system is designed so that in the event of any breakdowns, delays in recovery are usually very short, and inconvenience to the user is minimal. This is not easily achievable with Method 1 because of the inability in the evnet of an emmergency to swap to another central processor or reallocate other devices. Also ti would not be possible to have the avilability of maintenance personal in a small installation as for a large one where they would be resident.

It seems to me that we must take advantage of computer technology if we are to improve the techniques for producing braille. In time if the demand justified faster printing of braille, it would be possible to use a braille printing press with the input to the plates being generated by means of a computer.

In this paper I have merely been able to sketch briefly some of the areas that need to be considered when investigating the best method by which a computer can be used to aid braille production. I trust that what has been raised in this paper will direct us towards the solution of the problem of satisfying present and future demands for braille.

(b) Large Print

Large print books are now being published by four different publishing firms. Their main book supply is in the fiction area, with a limited number of titles in - Adventure, Romance, Mystery, Historical and Western and overlapping Mystery/Suspense and Historical/Romance.

The non-fiction titles are not as wide as fiction, although it is increasing but with more emphasis on Autobiographies, Biographies, and Literature, e.g. Bing (Crosby) by Charles Thompson, Majesty by Robert Lacey, Helen Keller's Journal by Helen Keller, Anna Neagle by Anna Neagle, The Prince Consort by Frank Eyck, Prisoner on the Kawai by Basil Peacock.

There is a variety of Bibles (Old/New Testaments, and books within the old have been produced singularly.)

Two types of Dictionaries, Oxford and an individuals compiling. There are also Desk Encyclopaedia comprising 10 volumes.

The children's books are sometimes out-dated and severely limited, e.g. the Milly Molly Mandy series, Katy series, Nurse Matilda series, Good Wives, Little Women, Alice in Wonderland, Robert Louis Stevenson series, and Tom Sawyer.

The same situation is applicable to recreational books such as the Do-It-Yourself Manual, Greenhouse Plants from Seed by Roy Genders, Making Wines at Home by Jack Levett, First Aid for your Dog by R. Sheldon and B. Lockwood, Grow Freeze and Cook by Sheila Howarth.

The main problem is there are very few technical books, although publishers are heading in the right direction.

They should be congratulated upon their bindings, which are more secure as they have been re-inforced and laminated or have had plastic jackets put over their dust covers.

(c) Audio

The first two papers in this section are included for discussion purposes. The general philosophy underlying these papers may not always be in complete harmony with this submission, nevertheless the greater scope and detailed information supports the points being made. visa vis The scope of valuable ideas in 'Thoughts .... ' by Barbara Blackman. visa vis detailed standards included in "Systems and Standards ..... " by Lloyd Junor.

Extracts From:

Supplement to "Buff" N.F.B.C. Magazine Summer Edition

Due to the increasing interest in the future of library facilities for the blind and/or the "Print Handicapped" we are including two personal views on the subject. We suggest that this material would make a stimulating basis for your first branch meeting in 1978, we feel sure these papers will assist you to formulate and crystalize your ideas as consumers.

We will be happy to print the views of "Members at large" in our letters to the editor column.

We look forward to the benefits we are sure will follow Margaret Fialides' Churchill Fellowship Study Tour early next year.

The Fellowship has been awarded for travel to Europe, U.K., U.S.A. Canada and Japan to study the preparation and management of recorded educational material, books and general information. Included will be a visit to Greece, hopefully to arrange for the importation of Greek talking books and to Italy to re-negotiate existing arrangements for importing Italian talking books. Radio Talking Book and general welfare services for the visually handicapped may also be included.

Thoughts Towards a Recorded Library for the Print Handicapped

1. A Recorded Library for the Print Handicapped should be established independant of all existing libraries or tape reading services for the blind or other physically handicapped people, but drawing on the resources of such libraries and open to their clients.

   The term Print Handicapped is preferable as it takes into account that people with diverse handicaps have similar reading needs. These include the blind, partially sighted, temporarily sightless, dyslexic, chronic arthritic, those hospitalized for long or short periods among others. Cumulatively these people comprise a sizeable sector of the community.

   (a) This library should operate out of its own Foundation, seeking tax-deductible contribution from the private sector and functioning autonomously;

   (b) it should receive Government help along the lines of the resolution passed at the 1977 convention of the National Federation of Blind Citizens, viz. "That reading facilities for the blind should be afforded the same financial support by Government as that which is given to libraries for the sighted. Furthermore we assert that libraries for the blind should be considered an integral part of National and State services in every respect."

   (c) it should incorporate international co-operation along the lines of the proposal of Dr. F. Cylke, Chief of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress of the U.S.A. brought forward to the International Federation of Library Associations Conference held in Brussels in September, 1977. requiringinternational co-ordination of library material and its distribution.

2. This library should be planned to be comprehensive of the many areas of reading requirement for it must be taken into account that print-handicapped people, as well as being deprived of access to printed books, magazine and periodical publications of all kinds and television viewing, are also restricted in their ownership of books of particular personal interest. Sighted people use libraries for reference or borrowing of books for a singlereading and own books on their home shelf but, up to now, this has not been easily possible for print-handicapped people.

Priority has been given in existing libraries to recreational reading material (especially in the Mark Four Talking Book libraries which concentrate on serving a clientele of average age of approx. 80 years) and educational text books (in the Tape Reading Students' Services). This leaves a vital segment of post-school blind people inadequately served.

Some areas where existing libraries are quite inadequate are:

(a) The heritage of literature. It is important that all people should have access to those books which constitute our historical heritage including those masterpieces known in translation from other languages. These are the books which have stood the test of time, added to human understanding, and are the background for the serious and informed reading of modern literature. Significant books of literary criticism and biography should be a part of this library area.

(b) Wider reading in student areas. Whereas students now are served by taped books to keep up with required text, it would be useful to them and of interest to other readers to have more extensive coverage of general reading in such areas as History, Music, Psychology, Sociology and those subjects being increasingly entered on as study courses by print-handicapped people.

(c) Descriptive writing. There is a great demand, hitherto little recognized by providers of libraries, for reading which will enlarge a blind person's experience of the world he cannot see for himself. Attention should be given to recording works on travel, scientific projects, archaeology, architecture, etc. by people who have great skill in describing and communicating the visual in word form. Blind people are keen to know about aspects of the creative visual world - art, cinema, television - which is also an area in which many dyslexic people often actively participate but find difficulty in reading up background material. This is an area in which the library would have to choose readers carefully and seek out those people who have a gift for describing paintings, cinema shots, architectural shapes, etc.

(d) Documentation of activity areas. Thought should be given to an extensive coverage of information-giving, pleasure-enlarging books on areas of activity open to blind people or possibly opening up for newly blind people - gardening, pet care, chess, stock market investing, music appreciation, handicrafts, etc. These especially should be made acquisitive.

3. This library should be set up as soon as possible using standard cassette and presently-available equipment. Advantages of the standard cassette use are as follows:

   (a) Although it is likely that 4-track cassettes with greater accommodation of reading time and 4-track players are to come on to the market soon and it is likely that some talking book libraries for the blind will convert to their use, it is desirable that this library be set up to use existing standard cassettes and players because, while there will alwys be some new technical development to supercede whatever is in existence, our needs are present needs and need solving by means of presently available equipment.

   (b) Books taped on standard cassette need not be scrapped when the 4-track improved cassette comes on to the market because they can co-exist, the 2-track being useable on the 4-track player.

   (c) Books recorded on 2 to 6 cassettes - using C90's this is a reading time of 8 to 9 hours - can be comfortably bound together by masking tape into simulated book form. Title and author can be written on this binding. The separate cassette cases open out allowing the cassettes to be removed and replaced in order, similar to the turning of the pages of a book. Though different in shape, this format compares favourably in terms of bulk with a printed volume of the equivalent text.

   (d) The standard cassette book can be played on a small pocket or handbag sized player (e.g. the Hanamaz Secretary) running on batteries and with small single ear plug attachment. Such players being small in bulk and weight, and such listening being both private but also allowing for the listener being aware of her sounds being heard through the other ear, a maximum reading time is gained, as the user can read while driving in cars, gardening, sunbaking, while engaged in housework, or travelling on public transport, etc. etc. It can be carried in its own over-shoulder bag. In this way the blind person can put in many more reading hours to compensate for his slower rate of aural reading.

   (e) As standard cassette players are in very common use, it is practicable for many people with proper home environment to make book readings for donation into the library. More time is available to such readers to record in this way than if they are obliged to travel and record by appointment in special studios.

4. The books read on to cassettes in this form remain always in the library as master tapes.

   The library is equipped with a tape copying machine for serving clients.

Library catalogue (in cassette form) indicates the number of cassettes needed for each book. (C90's)

Clients (i.e. print-handicapped people wishing to borrow books) seeking service write in a request to the library (writing in Braille, long hand, typed or on minitape) enclosing with it as many cassettes as are needed for that book. His requiredbook is fast-copied for him on the tapes he has supplied. The advantagesof this system are:

(a) All books are always available. No preference list is needed.

(b) The client can read what he likes when he likes.

(c) By participating in the cost, the client is buying his reading as do the print readers.

(d) Clients, by choosing whether to tape over a book received or retain on their own shelf for further reading, now have the possibility of owning books which are of continuing interest. The assumption that blind people must have their services free has often proved an obstacle to their needs being satisfactorily met. To quote from the address of Dr. Stephen Haskell to the N.F.B.C. convention of 1977, "A service structured to meet the needs of the poor results in a poor service."

(e) There are no problems over lost or overdue books.

(f) Keeping of library records is simplified.

(g) If master tapes etc. are marked in Braille,the job of making book copies on request could well be done by a blind person.

(h) A supplementary system of the library supplying the blank tapes at wholesale rates, invoicing the client with the taped book, would also create a job receiving telephoned requests which could be filled by a blind person.

(j) Additions to the catalogue could be listed on the end space generally available on the last cassette side of a recording, thus keeping clients informed of new books available to them.

5. A nucleus library of this system could be assembled and go into operation immediately as a demonstration of need and solution of need, by co-ordinating existing resources. Master tapes (in excess of 2,000 more than the number of Talking Books Mark Fours available in any one library at present) could be gathered from the following sources:

   (a) The several Student and Request Libraries that have been built up over the years catering for requested books, using volunteer readers and on either open reel or cassette - such as the Tape Reading Service R.V.I.B. Melbourne, the Weinholt Tape Reading Service, Queensland, the Hear-a-Book Library (Hobart and now Sydney), similar services attached to other blind institutes and several smaller personalized services. The providers who have worked diligently over the past decade or so to build up these libraries to cater for real needs express concern at their lack of co-ordination and regret that duplication of reading effort might be occurring unnecessarily.

(Hear-a-Book caters for print-handicapped generally). They have also expressed willingness to pool their tapes by lending them for the copying of master tapes or themselves donating copies to serve as master, (or mothers).

(b) By soliciting similar offers from clients who have, over the years, built up their own shelf of books read to them by friends or solicited readers. Much such material exists and most blind people would be willing to share it in this way. The above would involve -

(i) A library-skilled person collating all such catalogues

(ii) Expert technical work in sorting out the acceptable and non-acceptable reading performances. However, it should be strongly borne in mind that many clients, lacking alternatives, would rather read a book of their choice adequately read and be tolerant of some doemestic noise interference (dog bark, newsboy whistle, spoon tinkling,cup, etc.) and even some levelling faults, rather than not have the chance at all to intake a book that they feel is important to them.

(iii) Some transference of open reel recordings on to cassette.

Readers professional, voluntary and specially trained should be used.

(a) Professional newsreaders of radio and television, readers for radio, Telecom, etc. should be offered occasional or part-time employment at a library studio; or invited to donate readings made in their own environment. Country, as well as metropolitan, readers could be asked. Some regional radio stations might be willing to donate use of studio facilities for this purpose. They might incorporate this in introducing serialized book reading into their programs. This might particularly apply to books on Australian subject matter, fiction and non-fiction.

(b) Volunteer readers should be solicited by a wide promotion campaign. to be accepted they should -

(i) submit a sample tape reading out a passage or story in their proposed recording environment and equipment.

(ii) discuss with the librarian what books are needed in terms of what books they are most experienced or most interested to read;

(iii) estimate time in which this reading could be completed;

(iv) attend the library studio or some such specified place for at least one session of reading application;

(v) become conversant with the identification etc. announcements required and code of book editing from visual to aural.

(c) Readers should be solicited from specific groups - the advantage being getting people conversant with their subject and enthusiastic to promote knowledge and appreciation of this subject among a wider audience, for example;

(i) literary groups - such as the Dickens Fellowship, Burns Society, Brennan Society, The Goethe Institute, The Alliance Francais, The Dante Allegers, etc.

(ii) Scientific, philosophic, religious, ethnic (as above) etc. - such as the C.G. Jung Society, U.F.O. Society, Astrological Association, etc. etc. Historical Societies.

(d) Similarly readings could be invited from University or C.A.E. departments by qualified readers.

(e) Reading Training projects could be invoked with support - financial and promotional - from certain Welfare Departments and Education Authorities, for instance;

(i) Paraplegics and some other severely physically handicapped people who have, nevertheless, eyesight, time and potentiality, could be trained as readers, such training to be both theraputic and contributory to help the other (print) handicapped;

(ii) psychiatric patients confined for conditions and under treatment which does not preclude them from spending time reading while under observation;

(iii) prisoners undergoing rehabilitation especially those involved in resurgence activities (debating, playwriting, etc.);

(iv) a community contribution among Final High School students. School "activities" groups could make a project of a joint reading (short story collections, for instance) as a joint donation.

(f) Play readings should be solicited from drama students, amateur theatrical groups and conclaves of unemployed actors. (Plays read out by a single reader are seldom satisfactory). Not so, necessary for study purposes, stage direction, etc.

7: Other sources of readings to be acquired for the library would be:

(i) by exchange with similar libraries in other English-speaking countries, or from societies and departments as mentioned in the foregoing in other such countries;

(ii) by acquiring "mother" tapes from a National Archive of Recorded Literature if such is established by the Australian National Library. (ref: The "Australian" 23.8.1977 where I suggested the A.N.L. should give consideration to building up such an archive comprising

Australian books read out either by the writer or by a professional reader, the A.N.L. to pay for such reading, to loan the books out to a library for print-handicapped people at regular Library Lending Royalties to the writer, and also marketing this overseas as an Australian cultural export).

(iii) be seeking to enter into negotiations with the Australian Broadcasting Commission to have "mother" tapes made from previously broadcast material. Alternatively, to seek to interest the A.B.C. in buying for serialization book readings produced originally for the library.

(iv) by acquiring tapings of certain University, C.A.E. or Society addresses where appropriate and of acceptable standard. This is equivalent to broadcasting networks making recordings of concert performances for subsequent airing - allowance is made for environmental noises.

8. Copyright would have to be negotiated with the Copyright Council, publishers, broadcasters, etc. based on, but possibly different from, the arrangement presently made for Talking Book libraries. Associations of publishers and particular publishing houses should be consulted in order to prepare clauses in contracts with writers to allow writers to be consulted as to their wish to make their books available for reading for print-handicapped people.

9. This library should confer with and, wherever possible inter-relate with radio stations for the print-handicapped when and if such radio stations come into operation.

10. Extensive publicity should be given to the establishment of this library in order that the maximum number of print-handicapped people can be made aware of its facilities. Popularizing this library might pave the way to recorded books being a commercially viable enterprise making such books available as an alternative reading form and thus financing an ever-widening stock of titles.

SYSTEMS & STANDARDS IN THE PREPARATION OF AURAL MATERIALS

Status of this paper.

This paper has not been commissioned by any particular body. Its purpose is to provide a frame of reference for discussions amongst concerned groups or individuals.

The paper has been drawn up in the awareness that numerous bodies are currently producing or are about to produce recordings for educational and recreational purposes. In most instances the recordings will be used by individuals who are in some way restricted from using normal published print materials.

Information contained in this paper has been gathered from local and overseas sources. The writer has spent some time observing the operations of recording facilities in U.S.A. designed to assist the blind and handicapped.

In order to best utilize the human, mechanical, financial and space resources available to us in Australia, rationalization and standardization are needed at both local and national levels. It would be best to ensure that appropriate standards be accepted as soon as possible in order to direct all energies efficiently. It is my suggestion that, after sufficient time has passed for consideration and internal debate of the points raised in this paper, representatives of interested groups and institutions should meet to officially establish policy which will ensure compatibility of recorded materials and standards of recording which are universally acceptable.

Mr. Ken Runciman, Head of the Department of Special Education at Melbourne State College, has offered to host a Meeting on Audio Recordings later in 1977 - perhaps October would be a suitable time. I would be happy to assist in its organization.

Lloyd Junor

Centre for Media Studies & Services,
Melbourne State College.

PREPARATION OF AURAL MATERIALS

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

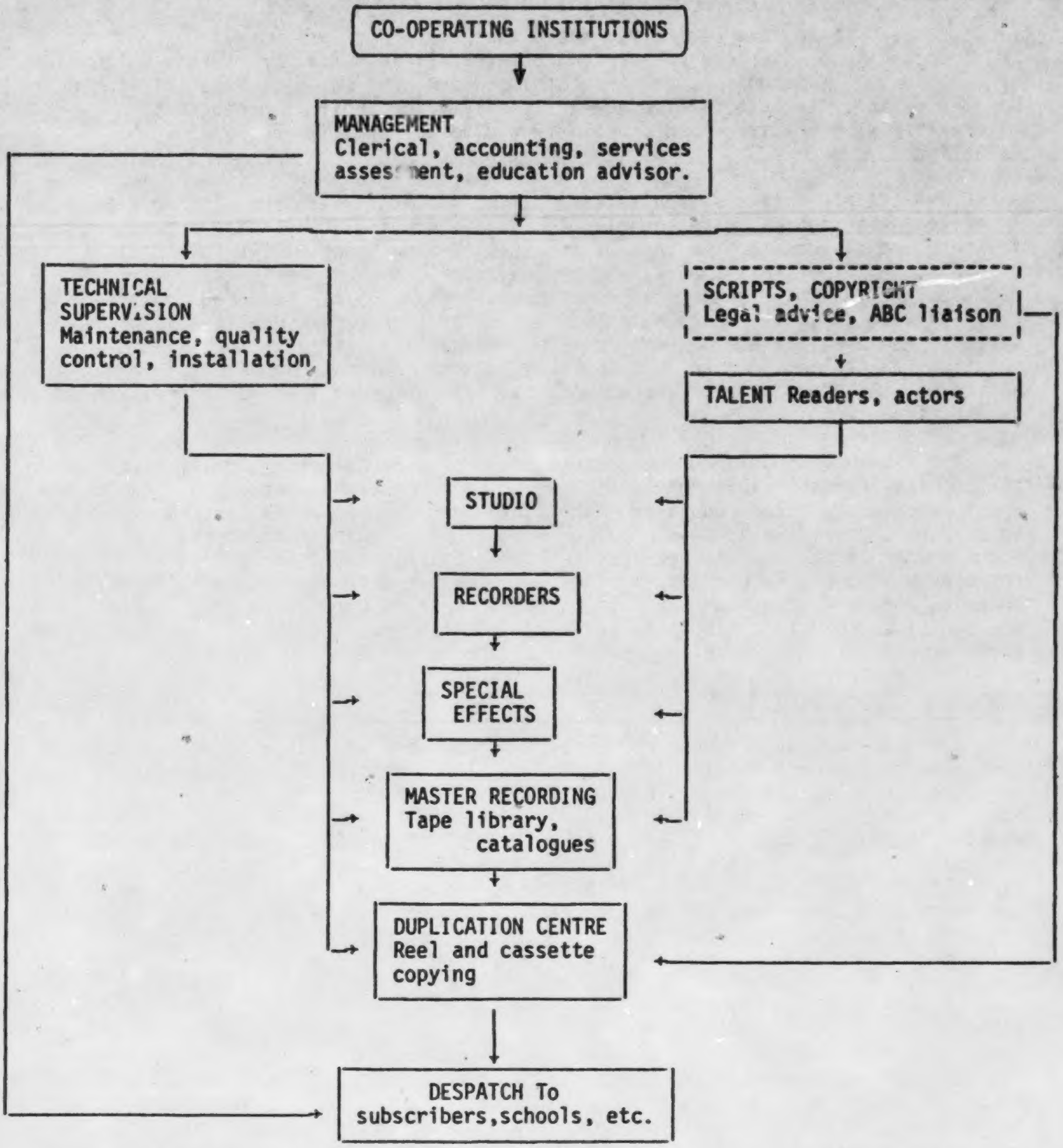
CO-OPERATING INSTITUTIONS
MANAGEMENT Clerical, accounting, services assessment, education advisor.
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION Maintenance, quality control, installation
SCRIPTS, COPYRIGHT Legal advice, ABC liaison
TALENT Readers, actors
STUDIO
RECORDERS
SPECIAL EFFECTS
MASTER RECORDING Tape library, catalogues
DUPLICATION CENTRE Reel and cassette copying
DESPATCH To subscribers,schools, etc.

FIGURE 1: Possible structure of a Centre established under auspices of a number of institutions.

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

MANAGEMENT

It needs to be recognized from the outset that there are many organizations in Victoria alone which currently produce materials in-house for courses which are common to all schools. Because of this common need motive, these institutions may decide to contribute to a management facility for their recordings. Alternatively, a new management, not attached to any existing body, could be established.

The latter course has usually been taken in U.S.A., with sponsorship from a service organization, city council, local government or university department to house the management, the cost of the service then being billed to the users.

Appointment to this the management position is probably best made on the basis of what an individual's potential is rather than experience in any local system. Above all, the management must be non-partisan and open to flexible solutions as problems demand. It would be advantageous for management to appreciate the educational, recreational, social and medical values underlying the service.

The management would be the executive arm of a Council (or some similar-titled legally responsible body) which would be composed of user representatives and independent elected councillors who could make a substantial contribution to the Council. It would be the responsibility of management to assess the requirements of staffing to service the user population satisfactorily, to apply for appropriate grant funds, to publicise the service, to cost and retail the products of the Centre, and initiate whatever projects were necessary to make the centre as near to financially self-sufficient as possible. In view of these demands, a full-time management would be needed.

TECHNICAL SUPERVISION

A Centre such as proposed would rely largely upon its ability to serve the community to support itself. This means, in blunt terms, that it must be able to sell the recordings produced. People, handicapped or otherwise, will not buy recordings which are of low standard. The appointment of a technical supervisor would be extremely important in the establishment of the Centre, for the day to day smoothness of operation would be largely dependent upon the technical capability of the supervisor to establish, maintain, and guide users in the operation of the equipment. The supervisor would need to be able to analyse the requirements of the service, and select on a value-for-money basis. Stability and continuity of operation for this aspect of the Centre would be important.

TALENT

One observation of the Readings for the Blind, Inc. system in U.S.A. by the writer is the tremendous emphasis placed on the talent used to make recordings. One of the greatest customers for recordings for the blind in U.S.A. is the federal government, and it simply does not buy recordings made by persons who are not judged to have clear articulation and diction free from heavy accentuations. In order to become a reader in U.S.A., one must submit a tape to the Library of Congress for approval and registration of suitability. Such registration allows well-spoken persons to make recordings for Centres for Readings for the Blind. The centres pay these readers for their services. This business-like approach has merit in it from several points of view. Firstly, there is a contractual obligation on behalf of both parties to get the recording done in the least practicable time and to present a professional product. The reader has a fixed reading schedule which is arrived at by mutual consent. Very often television and radio newsreaders choose to do these recordings.

Secondly, if there is material to be read which requires some special attention e.g. in a foreign language, in scientific terms, etc. the management can select the appropriate talent for that task.

Finally, because a high standard of recording is assured, the tapes are marketable not only to the specialist population for whom they were designed but also to the general public, including all levels of schools and colleges. The Centre retains copyright for original productions.

SCRIPTS, COPYRIGHT

Preparation of scripts is not often needed in readings for taping, as the common needs are for books (history texts, novels, short stories, plays, etc.) to be read directly onto tape. However, it can be very useful to have dramatizations of children's fiction prepared, and this involves script preparation. As with the reader talent, it is preferable to employ (admittedly often at reduced rates) a professional to prepare the script. Less time is wasted, the end product is more acceptable, and sales potential is increased.

An additional benefit is that persons working full-time in industry have invaluable contacts who can help advise on copyright requirements when literature is being transformed into aural form.

Original scripts may be devised from time to time to fulfil special needs. For instance, a large number of persons may need information on the operation of a new device, and the script would be prepared for this particular group's needs in mind.

One of the potentially most useful communications could be an Audio Newsletter available by subscription. New products, changes in governmental services, publicity about meetings and conferences, news items concerning sports events for handicapped, talks on issues of concern to the listenership and so on could all be published periodically. If a cassette was the medium used, it could have an adults' side and children's side.

Copyright is an issue which can be contentious. The Centre would have to display an attitude of integrity toward authors and publishers. One would hope that arrangements with authors and publishers could be made as cordially in Australia as they have been made with this type of specialist Centre in U.S.A. Tapes and discs properly produced and correctly distributed do not present a threat to print publishers: the sighted reader commonly reads at around 275 words per minute or better, whilst most voice readers rarely exceed 150 w.p.m., and the need to use replay equipment makes the book a much more attractive proposition for those who do read. For those who can only read by listening - the blind, the illiterate, the dyslexic, the severely physically handicapped - the tape is their only means of gaining information. It is not the policy of authors and publishers to actively discriminate against the less fortunate, so an atmosphere of mutual respect must be secured to enable the education of the handicapped to be furthered without jeopardy. Some royalties may be required from some publishers: control of production would ensure that the tape publications go to those with legitimate claims, and some form of payment (whether by the individual or by a social services grant) for royalties could be returned to the publisher of the print copy.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

THE RECORDING CENTRE

As suggested before, this Centre might be established on the campus of an existing institution which can offer bricks and mortar and other support facilities conducive to the smooth running of the operation. Possible sites include a large municipal library, a college of advanced education, a university with strong external studies commitments or commitments to special education, or facilities provided by an independent philanthropic body. The importance of location is paramount, because readers especially must have ease of access to the Centre. Parking space must be provided.

RECORDING STUDIO

Most tapes prepared in the past have been the result of efforts by volunteer readers. These volunteers have often been heavily committed to their work, and have read at home with their own equipment. It is due largely to the efforts of these people that the value of aural materials has been recognised. However, under these adverse conditions, many tapes were noisy and included distracting background noises. Sometimes levels were too low, other times distortingly loud.

A good recording environment is the first requirement for any voice recording. There should be studios of ample size with good ventilation, correctly lit, accoustically isolated from external noises. The rooms require correct wall and floor coverings to minimize reverberation, snug-fitting doors and double-glazed windows, and sufficient power and remote control electrical points to enable the user in the studios to operate the recording equipment placed outside the studios. Comfortable seating and noise-free internal furnishings are necessary.

Such studios can be constructed within an existing facility or prefabricated acoustic rooms can be used for the purpose. It is important that the studios be free of noise transmitted through the floor, walls, or from overhead if there are floors above the studios. Similarly one should seek isolation from traffic, aircraft and air conditioning noise, with a minimum of 45dB sound isolation.

RECORDERS

The technical specification of tape recorders is an issue to be decided only after the functional requirements are established. The trend towards standardization of formats and techniques is quite universal and can be briefly stated.

Apart from the studio, a good recording begins with a broadcast-quality microphone mechanically isolated in the studio. This microphone generates electrical impulses which are delivered to the input of a reel tape recorder operating at a tape speed of either 9.5cm/sec. or 19cm/sec. In order to minimize irregularities in the dynamic level of the recording the signal from the microphone is passed through a limiter/compressor which has been adjusted to supply the tape recorder with the optimum signal level.

The recorder must be rugged and durable. It must have protection against accidental misuse. This is acheived by solenoid operation. It must be operable remotely, and this can be done with all solenoid-operated recorders. The recorder should be able to accept 10" reels and hubs to enable lengthy programs to be recorded. It should have a monitor system which will enable the reader in the studio to listen to the tape at will after recording.

Tapes should be prepared with a view to duplicating them at high speed. For this reason they should be recorded half-track at only 9.5 cm/sec. or 19 cm/sec. on a tape which has a record/replay duration exactly matching commercially available cassettes. Tape stock of 1mm or 1.5mm will ensure long life and minimize print-through whilst the tape is in storage.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Sometimes it will be necessary to add effects to recordings. To enable this a small library of sound effects may be established, along with a turntable and sound mixing equipment. It will at times be useful to have a chime in the recording studio to use when preparing teaching tapes or tapes for use with slides.

TAPE DUPLICATION

The end function of the Centre is to provide copies of recorded materials to individuals who have legitimate need for those materials. To some extent the number of persons requiring materials will be predictable; subscriptions to an Audio Newsletter or other periodical in audio format will be of a known number. There will be another group of customers who will require service on demand, who will ask for goods when their interests motivate them. The Centre must be able to respond quickly to these needs. Response will usually be the provision of a duplicated copy from master tapes held in the master library. On some occasions the request will initiate the production of new recording.

It is not wise to under-estimate the value of the machinery used in a tape duplication service. It must be utterly reliable, need a minimum of service, be simple to maintain, have strong dealer reliability, and provide a maximum number of tapes of high quality with a minimum of fuss. Cheaper copiers are freely available, but should be regarded as domestic rather than industrial copiers. The complete dependence of the Centre on this single piece of capital equipment to service all the clients warrants careful study and opinion-seeking before an order is placed.

Tapes which are required by clients will be needed in either reel or else cassette form, cassette being the more popular. There does not seem to be any point in preparing tapes for almost obselete formats such as the talking book, when initial capital cost of the units, the sheer bulk of tapes, and the non-universality of the format is contrasted with the comparative cheapness, compactness, reliability and international interchangeability of the compact cassette and its associated hardware. The new technology, including computer systems, recording equipment, and playback equipment such as speech time-compressors and time-expanders has at its centre the international compact cassette, which is available in any desired recording length up to 3 hours per side, and to a variety of quality standards.

Comment should be made upon the several track formats used in tape recordings. The diagram below summarizes the track formats which are of most consequence. (FIGURE 2).

Notice that the only problematic format is that nominated by the U.S. Library of Congress. It is not compatible with all other track configurations without some modification to standard record/replay equipment. Numerous inquiries seeking the logical for the L C track format have revealed nothing of substance: the decision constantly frustrates the users of tape in U.S.A. Instead of becoming a leader in provision of tapes for the blind, it seems that the blind population regard this decision on track format by the Library of Congress to have distanced the institution from its customers. In everyday practical terms this odd 4-track configuration is ignored and preference given to convential recording configuration. Only two models of tape players in the world appear to be made currently to accommodate this L C format, so its use in Australia could be considered a non-issue.

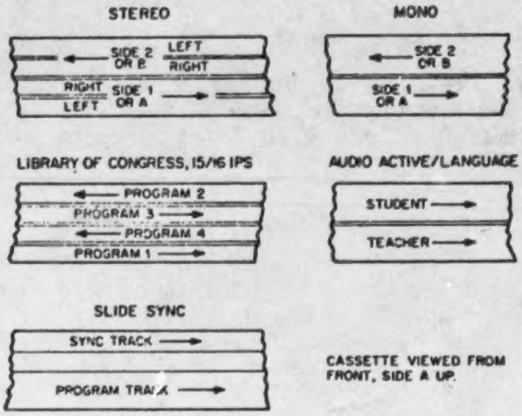

FIGURE 2: Cassette track configurations

Provision of a speed of $^{15}/_{16}$ ips in addition to the normal $1^{7}/_{8}$ ips is another aspect of the LC format. The intelligibility of speech recorded in this manner is not particularly good due to a number of technical considerations, and music reproduction is hopeless at $^{15}/_{16}$ ips in terms of modern expectations. This comment is offered to reinforce the contention that LC format is of low interest to Australia. However, debate on this issue should be encouraged before final decisions are made, as this would have bearing on technical aspects of recording productions.

Attention must also be given to the tape used in this duplication Centre. Poor tape yields poor recordings, can cause machine problems, and usually has a high failure rate. Failure rate of cassettes should not exceed 0.5% inclusive of all mechanical and coating problems in an operation of the size envisaged.

DESPATCH TO CLIENTS

Compact cassettes can be posted in crush-resistant jackets quite conveniently. Australia Post carries matter for the blind free of charge. Modern envelope-addressing techniques should be employed to ensure efficient despatch and distribution of materials. This distribution aspect would be a function of management.

OTHER ISSUES

CLEARINGHOUSE FUNCTION

The many societies and associations which currently find it difficult to circulate their members are likely to be able to use a facility such as has been described to great advantage. They could still produce their own special-interest programs, and perhaps contribute to an Audio Magazine on a monthly basis using the Centre's facilities.

A central clearinghouse of information would tend to have a co-ordinating effect upon the groups which use the service, and contribute toward mutual recognition and co-operation. News on mobility aids, devices for calculations, special employment or education opportunities could be handled through the clearinghouse.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION

In due course it is hoped that the Centre would develop expertise which would enable it to attract grants for research into matters of concern, and to develop valuable services in the light of research findings. The Centre should be in regular communication with counterparts overseas.

INDEPENDENCE VERSUS GOVERNMENTAL DEPENDENCE

Drawing largely on observation of USA organizations, there certainly seems to be much in favour of the erection of a Centre which is fully responsive to the needs of the community it serves and which, in turn, supports it. The notion of an independent organization, controlled by a Board of Directors or a Council, which is a non-profit organization selling its services and materials to make it self-sufficient, might not be attractive to contemporary Australian thought which seems to believe that government must provide just about everything. In actuality a sizeable proportion of the materials sold would go to state and federal governments, ensuring the continuation of the service. This type of independent production organization can and does exist widely in USA, and would be instrumental in giving a filip to those who need just a little encouragement to establish a co-operative working system in Australia.

AGENCY

A Centre along the lines proposed would be a focal point for services for the handicapped. The Centre should acquire rights to represent British, Canadian, and American producers of hardware and software for the handicapped throughout Australia. This would simplify and expedite the import and, where needed, modification of materials. A minimal profit derived from this service would contribute to the Centre's self-sufficiency.

Lloyd Junor.
June 1977

READING BY RADIO AND LIBRARY OF THE AIR by Barbara Blackman

6th July, 1978

New developments in radio in Australia are making it possible, as elsewhere in the world, for the use of this media as a form of reading service and library facility for people unable to read print for themselves.

RADIO FOR THE PRINT HANDICAPPED takes the form of EITHER part time broadcasts on community, access, or special interest radio stations, non-commercial and non-Government in character, OR as full time radio stations operating on exclusive broadcast area such as Marine Band or FM sub-carrier. In Australia at present, there are access service programs in Melbourne ("Radio for the Blind" and "Information for the Print Handicapped" 30 mins. weekly on 6NR New Radio operating from W.A.I.T.) AND, more extensively, in the pioneer programs for 2 hours daily on public broadcast from 6 UWA FM in Perth.

Based on the American experience and on surveyed consumer needs in Australia, this radio would aim to provide three kinds of programs:

1. Reading of daily, weekly and monthly newspapers, supplements and magazines to fulfil the need for immediate information on current affairs, feature and in-depth journalism, and special interest areas as covered by sport, country life, women's hobbies, trade, etc. periodical publications.

2. Service programs specifically aimed at particular groups to inform them of relevant equipment, social activities, personalities, new trends of planning, etc. in their particular handicap area. These programs could include interviews, notifying of Talking Book new publications, slow reading or remedial reading lessons, fast reading of information data for blind people, etc. and can cover much of the informing work done by welfare workers, home visitors, etc.

3. Literature and Arts review material. This includes the reading of stories, books, poetry, plays, etc. verbal descriptions of visual material (landscape to spelling) and of talks and readings intended to develop and keep currently informed interests in music, theatre, architecture, etc.

The present pioneering of Radio for the Print Handicapped at 6 UWA FM in Perth comprises two programs of (1) and (3) READING BY RADIO. For 75 minutes daily 10 - 11.15 a.m. three volunteer readers read live from daily newspapers and weekly supplements or magazines of current affairs. (Contrast this with a similar coverage of material on casette put out by the R.B.S. of N.S.W. of 90 mins per month; note the advantages of radio in terms of immediacy and cost and the ability, via a casette radio player to take down and store the material for later listening.)
LIBRARY OF THE AIR 11.15 a.m. to 12 noon. These are taped readings of stories and books by great writers read by volunteer readers with experience in voice training, radio reading or theatre. 45 minutes is generally felt to be a comfortable listening span and allows for these tapes to be subsequently fed into a casette library service.
As Executive Producer for these programs (in the capacity of an Honorary member of the staff of the Extension Service of the University of Western Australia) it is my experience that there is a great resource of volunteer readers highly capable for immediate reading service, and that the cost of producing these programs is low when compared with producing such material by other means. Any investigation into the future fulfilment of reading and library needs of the print handicapped should

devote thought, finance and planning to this use of radio as a media for immediate distribution of information and for originating dissemination of literature. Further, it is affirmed by my experience at 6UWA FM that the roles of Executive Producer, Studio Producer and On-air Announcer can be taken by blind people. In this respect it must be noted that at MacQuarie University in N.S.W. there has been designed a Tactile Voice Leveller which overcomes the need for sighted dial reading on tape recording equipment. It is important that blind people participate at all levels in the decision-making and, wherever possible, in the practical execution of format and content of reading resources and libraries intended for their benefit.

SECTION 3

A RECOMMENDED OUTLINE FOR A NATIONAL STRUCTURE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

The National Federation of Blind Citizens recommends the formulation of the following committees to oversee library services to therefore integrate and formalising national objectives.

1. A National Co-ordinating Committee, chaired by a senior representative from the National Library. This nomination should ensure an emphasis on library considerations of a national character, rather than general State welfare obligations. Other representatives on the Committee could include representatives from State welfare agencies for the blind who are presently concerned in library services, from volunteer groups serving library needs, a suitable Government representative such as a nominee from N.A.C.H. and most importantly, representatives from consumer groups which are national in character.

   The major aim of the Co-ordinating Committee would be to infuse library facilities with a national rationale; to formulate standards of production, to set up a formal certification course for Braille transcription and proof reading, to oversee standards generally, as prescribed in Section 2; to organise a national composite catalogue which would then be available to all State divisional libraries for the print handicapped, to generally professionalise services and to co-ordinate these according to total consumer requirements.

   The Committee could also encourage and instigate pilot schemes and research projects, co-ordinating individual State programmes of this kind.

   A prime responsibility of the Co-ordinating Committee would be to discourage unnecessary, costly and inefficient duplication of services.

2. An Accountability Committee comprising representatives from consumer groups, Library Association of Australia, and a suitable Government nominee.

   The functions of this Committee would include the appraisal of the quality and range of library facilities provided by both welfare agencies and divisional State Libraries and the recommended allocation of Government Fund.

3. A State Multi-Media Library which would be a special division of the State and Regional Library System serving the sighted.
   (Reference: Policy No. 77.20) Page 40

   Library functions and procedures are outlined in Section 2, under General and Specific Principles and requirements. We reiterate the following aspects because of their importance:

   (a) The different reading modes used by the blind are complementary in nature; they are in no way exclusive.

   (b) Staff should be trained librarians supported by people of suitable qualification who have undertaken in-service training.

4. A Book Selection Committee attached to each State Divisional Multi-Media Library comprising librarians and consumers. This Committee would be responsible for book acquisition recommendations and for receiving individual requests for books to be produced.

5. State Book Production and Maintenance Centres:

   The prime responsibility of book production and maintenance should rest with the agencies for the blind, each agency extending existing production and specialising wherever interest and experience directs, without undue duplication. These Centres should act on the recommendations of the State Book Selection Committees and should respond to individual requests for book ownership.

   An effective co-ordinating Committee would ensure effective Braille production centres could exist in the major States. Maintenance and machine distribution could still be handled through the usual welfare channels. The prime responsibility of this Committee would be the production of master tapes; clients, whether they be libraries or individuals seeking to own their books, could then purchase copies in the form required. These Centres should be non-profit in nature, providing material at a suitable cost, and seeking funds for their exclusive use.
   (Reference: "A Discussion Paper ...." by Lloyd Junor, Page 22 .)

SECTION 4

APPENDIX

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS BY MEMBERS REGARDING TALKING BOOK SERVICES IN RESPONSE TO SURVEYS CARRIED OUT IN N.S.W. AND VICTORIA.

Contribution in response to library service in N.S.W. - **Barbara Blackman** extract concerning talking books.

Inadequacies in these systems are as follows:

Re the Mark Four Talking Book Library at the R.B.S.

(a) This lending service is State-bound. Unlike the equivalent two libraries in Victoria - the R.V.I.B. and the independant Braille and Talking Book Library - it has not been built up on a policy of buying almost all books on offer from the U.K. But if I as a descriminating reader, wish to read one of these titles which is available in another State, I am unable. Also, if I am willing to buy such a book from the U.K. to read and then donate into the Library, I cannot.

(b) There is no simple recording machine for the Mark Four such as could be loaned to volunteer readers prepared to read in their own homes and in their own time, and thus be a source of augmenting the titles in the library.
N.B. The R.V.I.B. have now purchased a Mark Four tape copying machine for their library and, I believe, are intending to transfer some of the good readings on their open reel library (built up by volunteer readers as above) and so increase their number of titles considerably.

(c) This service being charity-funded, the situation is not conducive to criticism from its beneficiaries.

(d) As funding for this library comes from a general budget of an Institution constituted as a welfare organization, it is looked upon as a "recreational" Facility and therefore constituted mainly of light fiction, romances, thrillers and such like "popular" reading.

(e) Allocation of R.B.S. funds for library are necessarily restricted and the greater part of this is used in purchasing equipment, its maintenance and the salaries for studio and library attendants. Very little is available for increasing titles.

(f) The statistical majority of blind people are those who lose sight in old age and these are the people particularly in contact with the R.B.S. Therefore the library is geared to their reading tastes. The average age of clients is 80 years.

(g) In the selection of books to be added to the library no well-informed advice sought from any person with library planning experience or anyone such as a critic, publisher or member of staff of a University English Department who is knowledgeable about books and understands their power and importance in people's lives.

(h) Consumer consultation is not sought to any extent, particularly the desires of people under 70 years.

(i) Because of staff inadequacies, preference lists returned by clients are seldom operative. This results in discriminating readers being sent books they would not choose to read.

(j) The catalogue for this library is available only in printed form and therefore not easily accessible to blind people, many of whom would appreciate having the titles read on casette to make their use of the library more fruitful.

(k) No planning of catalogue content for the particular interests of blind people is done. Thus the library lacks altogether, or has only minimally, books in the following categories:

  (i) The heritage of literature - those books which have stood the test of time, been read by many generations, and may be said to be valuable conveyors of the human spirit and able to enrich the lives of those who read them; or, otherwise stated, the books whose reading goes to make a "well-read" person.
  e.g. the set books in English literature for H.S.C. and University courses.

  (ii) Information texts. These are books informative of activities or interests open to a blind person or that might open for a person who becomes blind - such as cooking, gardening, chess, childbirth, child care, pet care, martial arts, etc. etc.

  (iii) Books of high descriptive content. These are of the kind that help blind people to share what other people experience visually - such as landscape, architecture, cinema, art, aspects of science, engineering, exploring, etc.

  (iv) Books about music.

  (v) Humour

  (vi) Children's Books

  (vii) Books of literary criticism

(l) Because of the geographic situation of the library and staff shortages it operates mainly as a mailing service and therefore it is not possible for clients to browse about or be guided and encouraged into new fields of reading.

NOTE: Recently, approaches to the R.B.S. have been made by the Australian Guild of Business and Professional Blind and the National Federation of Blind Citizens to bring their concern about these matters to notice. As a result an elected member of these organizations (myself) has been invited to monthly meetings of the Talking Book Planning Committee. I have taken along to these meetings one or two other blind people as consumers. Similarly these organizations have written to Dr. Chandler at the Australian National Library stressing the need for blind representation on the existing Working Party into library needs of the Handicapped.

Copy of Contribution by Gail Thornton.

"On speaking with other blind people it has been made clear that there are many gaps in the system at present but obviously I can only speak about the areas which directly affect me. I feel that a fully qualified librarian is a vital necessity to the library at present. Apart from this person's expertise I feel that contact with a librarian is necessary for advice and stimulation in my selection of books. Many areas which would have been otherwise disregarded or abandoned can be discovered through discussions. A qualified librarian would tend to select books more wisely than an untrained person even with good intent.

Another problem area is the lack of a range of works by established modern authors. For example, there is one book only by Scott Fitzgerald in the Talking Book Library, one only by Gore Vidal and none by Patrick White, Australia's Nobel Prize winning author. As you are aware, the inclusion of only one or two works by a writer does not represent a clear idea of his or her range and ability.

European writers are poorly represented on our shelves, for example French, Italian and Russian authors - not only in the classics but also in modern literature.

Contemporary literature is another sadly neglected area and I am sure you will understand that when any social discussion takes place on this subject it is quite beyond the range of a blind person unless they have had the benefit of a private reader. I also enclose a list of the ten best selling books, lifted from the Melbourne Age of Saturday, 24th June, 1978 and on checking the Talking Book catelogue it has been noted that none of these books are listed. I would also put it to you that if you were to check lists of this nature dating back for the past few years, you would also find that not many of the books on those lists have been put on tape and, if they have been, how long did it take for them to get into the library?

I would like to point out that there is a lack of co-ordination between the existing Australian tape libraries. It was reported in the press that "Picnic at Hanging Rock" by Joan Lindsay was read and taped in 5 different States - surely this represents a loss of 4 other valuable books."

GAIL THORNTON

AGE 24/6/78

'The Age' best sellers

THIS monthly list of best sellers is compiled in collaboration with the book trade journal, **The Australian Bookseller and Publisher**, from information supplied by some 200 bookshops throughout Australia.

Before the second world war it was very difficult to sell Australian books; but since then, with increasing affluence, nationalism and interest in protecting the Australian heritage, there has been a steady growth in the number of Australian books published, sold and, presumably, read. This month's bestseller list supports this trend with a record number of Australian books, seven out of ten in non-fiction, and four out of ten in the fiction area. This latter figure is particularly pleasing because even when non-fiction Australian books sell well, the novel is generally trailing well behind.

The overall picture shows that **The Human Factor, The Silmarillion, Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady, I Claudius** and **The Hite Report** are way out in front of the others, **The Thorn Birds** appearing on both the hardback and paperback list, and, once again, the selling potential of books promoted by films or television.

FICTION:

1. (1) THE HUMAN FACTOR, by G. Greene (Collins $9.95) May (2).
2. (2) THE SILMARILLION, by J. R. R. Tolkien (Allen & Unwin $12.95) Oct. (8).
3. (5) THE THORN BIRDS, by C. McCullough (Harper & Row $12.50) July (11).
4. (x) BLOODLINE, by S. Sheldon (Collins $11.95).
5. (x) SWORDS, CROWNS AND RINGS, by R. Park (Nelson $9.95).
6. (3) WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE, by S. L. Elliot (Macmillan $9.95) April (3).
7. (4) DREAMS DIE FIRST, by H. Robbins (N.E.L. $12.95) March (4).
8. (x) A VICTIM OF THE AURORA, by T. Keneally (Collins $11.95).
9. (6) THE WOMEN'S ROOM, by M. French (Hutchinson $9.95) April (3).
10. (7) GOODBYE CALIFORNIA, by A. MacLean (Collins $9.95) April (3).

NON-FICTION:

1. (1) COUNTRY DIARY OF AN EDWARDIAN LADY, by E. Holden (Nelson $16.95) May (2).
2. (x) GNOMES, by W. Huygen (Macmillan $14.95).
3. (x) ENDURANCE OF LIFE, by M. Burnet (MUP $15.00).
4. (x) AUSTRALIANS AT RISK, by A. Deveson (Cassell $5.95)
5. (x) JOH, by H. Lunn (Univ. of Qld Press $9.95).
6. (x) IN SEARCH OF HENRY LAWSON, by Manning Clark (Macmillan $14.95).
7. (4) IN THE WILD, by H. Butler (Hodder & Stoughton $8.95) Nov. (7).
8. (x) PERMACULTURE ONE, by B. Mollison & D. Holmgren (Corgi $4.95).
9. (x) LOOKING OUT FOR NUMBER ONE, by R. Ringer (Outback $12.50).
10. (x) HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA, by Manning Clark (MUP $17.50)

PAPERBACKS:

1. (1) I, CLAUDIUS, by R. Graves (Penguin $2.95) April (3).
2. (6) THE HITE REPORT, by S. Hite (Summit $3.95) May (2).
3. (x) THE THORN BIRDS, by C. McCullough (Harper & Row $3.95).
4. (2) ROOTS, by A. Haley (Picador $4.95) June (6).
5. (10) CLAUDIUS THE GOD, by R. Graves (Penguin $2.95) May (2).
6. (x) SLEEPING MURDER, by A. Christie (Fontana $2.50).
7. (x) SOME OF ME POETRY, by P. Ayres (Arrow $2.95).
8. (x) SOME MORE OF ME POETRY, by P. Ayres (Arrow $2.95).
9. (x) MAJESTY, by R. Lacey (Sphere $3.95).
10. (3) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, by S. Spielberg (Sphere $2.75) April (3).
11. (7) EVERYWOMAN, by D. L. Jones (Faber $4.75) May (2).
12. (x) PINK PAGES, by B. Bishop & K. Peterson (Penguin $4.50).

NOTE: Number (3) before each title indicates its position on last month's list; (x) indicates a new title; (-) missed last month's list; the month after the title indicates the month in which the title first appeared on this list; and the number (2) the number of times it has appeared on this list.

toys, games,

Application for Grant (literature) submitted 8th June, 1978, by the Library Committee of the National Federation of Blind Citizens (N.S.W.)

Extracts from:

Application has been made for Special Project Grant of $10,000 for a programme to demonstrate the need and means of fulfilment for blind people to be able to borrow with option to own audio books on cassette from a Reading Resource Centre.

The application for a grant is for a demonstration or Pilot project. It is not intended that this should become an on-going or recurrent grant.

The aims are:

(a) To demonstrate the need and indicate means of practical fulfilment for request tape reading service with optional audio book ownership at a time when investigations are being made into the "state" of library services for the blind, with insufficient direct consultantion with blind people themselves, as users ..... Because this project is originating from an organisation of blind citizens and because the project officer will be working directly out of contact with them, the results of this project will be significant in terms of State Library planning.

(b) to make a start of meeting a vital and hitherto unrecognized need in terms of book ownership.

It is envisaged that, on completion of this project, a Reading Resource Centre along the lines demonstrated, should be set-up either by an agency such as the Royal Blind Society, or State Public Library of NSW or as part of the National Library, or by some independent organisation constituted for this purpose.

APPENDIX B

We submit that the grant should be used to produce high quality master tapes to be copied and distributed through the existing channels that is public and agency libraries, according to copy-right conditions. These master tapes should supply some of the demands in the following areas of need:-

1. Recreational reading for children, ranging in aid from pre-school to adulthood. We must point out that no formal programme of this kind exists and that it has been alleged that audio reading material would decrease the children's interest in reading braille and magnified print. We believe that the availability of literary material in recorded form would supplement parent and teacher readings aloud and story telling, thus stimulating the child's interest in books and independent reading, where the child actually holds a book of its own and which others have leafed through before.

2. Adult recreational reading of the kind not already supplied on tape. We suggest that it would be necessary to appraise the coverage of existing recorded material. We draw your attention to the fact that existing material has either been produced for students or is of the talking book variety, mainly produced to meet the needs of the blind overseas. Books produced in New South Wales have been of patchy recording quality although there has been some serious attempt to supply some of our Australian literary heritage.

3. To extend existing supplies of current ephemeral material. We point out that this is a new area of service which has only recently been inaugerated. Copyright restrictions would not be so inhibiting in the production of this material and we suggest that other groups of the print handicapped would be particularly interested.

4. Material which could be used in a future library of the air. This would necessitate a different approach and presentation. We draw your attention to the pioneering work being done by Mrs. Barbara Blackman in Perth per the medium of University F.M. Radio. This approach would ensure to some extent that print handicapped readers could be kept abreast of current literature and it could serve to introduce sections of literary heritage which have not previously been covered in their libraries.

APPENDIX C

N.F.B.C. Policies Relevant to this Document

The following policies should be viewed according to the spirit of their intent, rather than in their details for implementation.

77.11 "Whilst we appreciate and commend the progressive steps that have so far been taken, this convention encourages David Syme and Company to solicit advertising with a view to advertising as economically as possible a large-print news magazine, at low cost to the readers to include - broad news coverage, in-depth articles on current affairs and other items of public interest a variety of light reading and general information".

77.12 "This convention requests that information issued by the Government Printer, such as the post code bulletin be printed in more solid type and against more contrasting background and that it also be made available on cassette and in braille."

77.18 "This Convention requests the Executive to take steps to call a conference in Australia to discuss standards, production and distribution of written and spoken media for blind people".

77.19 "That in a society which is increasingly illiterate and media orientated, blind people, who have had the advantage of having talking-books made available to them for some time past, should take the initiative following the history of the typewriter and the long-play record having been developed for general use, from equipment originally developed for blind people; to bring into general use, forms of talking-book reading for general use among people who would wish to enjoy this form of reading. Therefore, a talking-book machine should be developed and put on the commercial market, and libraries of cassette books should be generally available. Further, either in conjunction with such libraries, or independently of them, blind people should give encouragement and support to the setting up of radio stations devoted to the reading out in serial form, or to the reading of current magazine material regularly."

77.20 "That reading facilities for the blind should be afforded the same financial support by government as that which is given to the libraries for the sighted. Furthermore, we assert that libraries for the blind should be considered an integral part of the national and state services, in every respect."

77.21 "This Convention deplores the fact that the standard of talking-book cassettes from the D. Phillips Memorial Studios, and the quality of their readers, are in general inferior to the standards of the R.N.I.B. service."

77.22 "This Convention urges that talking-book libraries take into consideration consumer needs as expressed by the users, when selecting books to be recorded or acquired. Furthermore, we submit that popularity should not be the sole criterion for selection, as the needs of the more selective and discriminating readers should be seriously considered, despite the fact that they are in minority group."

78.1 "That with the advent of mass production of Braille and of high speed copying facilities in Australia, N.F.B.C. requests publication of radio programme guides in Braille, large print and cassette format for regular distribution to blind people. -

78.2 "That the N.F.B.C. urges the production of a monthly magazine on local matters of current interest be produced in Braille, large print and on tape."

78.3 "That the Social Security Department in conjunction with agencies for the blind and N.F.B.C. be asked to produce a leaflet in Braille, large print and cassette"

78.4 "That the N.F.B.C. welcomes and commends the "Hear a Book" Organization for the high quality of reading, recording, and of interesting material on its cassettes. -

78.5 "That we commend those Agencies such as the "Braille and Talking Book Library of Victoria, and the R.B.S. of N.S.W. who have increased the production and distribution of sound magazines." -

78.6 "That N.F.B.C. commends those Braille distributors which have increased their volume of Interpoint Braille, thus decreasing the problems of storage and carriage for consumers."

78.25 "That the N.F.B.C. endorse every blind person's right to own books of their own choice; that in order to achieve this, the public or agency libraries be urged to set-up or develop existing facilities for books to be recorded at the request of indivuduals. And in particular, the NFBC immediately set-up a Library subcommittee to pursue an existing opportunity. This opportunity follows the Premiers' Enquiry into Library Resources."

APPENDIX VI

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED: A SELECT READING LIST

Prepared for the Seminar by the Australian National Social Sciences Library (ANSOL)

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